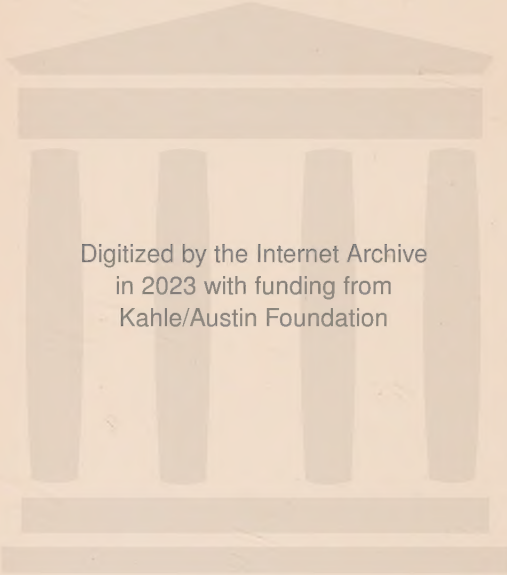




WITHDRAWN







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Alexander Henry's  
Travels and Adventures







*Engraved by P. Matherick from an original drawing*





ALEXANDER HENRY

ENGRAVED FROM AN ORIGINAL MINUTEMAN

The Lakeside Classics

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Alexander Henry's  
Travels and Adventures  
in the Years 1760-1776

EDITED WITH  
HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY  
MILO MILTON QUAIFE

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WITH FRONTISPIECE AND MAP



The Lakeside Press, Chicago  
R. R. DONNELLEY & SONS COMPANY  
CHRISTMAS, MCMXXI



## Publishers' Preface

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FROM time to time the preface to these volumes has taken on the form of an intimate talk between the publishers and the reader about the ideals and the organization of The Lakeside Press. Apropos of the extended strike for shortening an already short work week which has recently disrupted the printing industry throughout the country, a statement of its labor policy may not be amiss at this time.

It is the ambition of the publishers that The Lakeside Press shall become a peculiar institution in the printing industry; one in which its work shall be carried on in the spirit of the highest traditions of the art and, by a contented and permanent organization of executives and workmen.

The Lakeside Press is neither a union nor an open shop; it is honestly non-union. The management of a great industry occupies the position of a trustee both to the public and to its employees. The public should receive its commodities uninterruptedly and at a price as low as is consistent with fair wages, good working conditions, and reasonable profit. The employees should be guaranteed as continuous employment as possible, an opportu-

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## Publishers' Preface

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nity to earn high wages in return for increased production, and protection in their rights as American citizens. The officers of The Lakeside Press believe that this trusteeship can only be fulfilled when the relations between the management and the employees are unhampered by the arbitrary dictation of union officials who have no direct interest in the welfare either of the establishment or its employees.

Whatever may have been the necessities in the past for labor unions as a protection against abuse, today the demand of modern industry for contented, smooth-working organizations, and the revelation through factory accounting that high skill at high wages means lower unit costs, are labor's greatest protection. Labor unions to a great extent have become the tools of ambitious leaders in labor union politics and are kept in existence only for their personal aggrandizement and profit, and by the apathy and weakness of the employers. Most unions lay an unfair burden on the public, stifle advancement in the art of increasing production and lowering costs, and are a millstone around the necks of the workmen themselves.

Of the two thousand odd employees of The Lakeside Press, not one is a member of any labor organization, and in spite of the repeated attempts of the labor unions to entice away its employees, the organization has



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## Publishers' Preface

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been successfully maintained on this basis for sixteen years, through the application of the principle of fair play, and the fact that, untrammelled with union restrictions, the men have been able to earn more money than elsewhere. During the war, when labor was scarce, the employees did not leave for other jobs; of the 205 men and boys who went to war, four were killed and 196 came back to the plant as "home," and during the many strikes that have disturbed the printing industry in Chicago during the last sixteen years, not one man has gone out on strike. These facts seem satisfactory evidence that The Lakeside Press is "a good place to work."

The Apprenticeship School, the Taylor system of scientific management and weekly bonuses for increased efficiency, and the quick settlement of all differences and grievances by frank discussion between the officers and the employees are all contrary to union rules, but are the very foundations upon which the organization has been built up.

Should the national unions in the printing industry accept the principle of the open shop and recognize the right of every man to work regardless of his union affiliations, comfortably and without molestation, an open shop would be practical and the only one that would be fair. But the national unions do not recognize the open shop except under compulsion and accept it only as a temporary

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## Publishers' Preface

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truce in a perpetual warfare. The experience of the last year has proven that the open shops of the country had been secretly organized and their production interrupted by the general strike, while the shops that had been maintained on the non-union basis were undisturbed. Only fair dealing can successfully maintain a non-union shop, and the management of The Lakeside Press, realizing their trusteeship to the public and to their employees, have deliberately assumed the burden of so treating their employees that they neither need nor desire the interference of labor unions.

This year we have taken for the subject matter of the volume an early narrative of travel centering around Mackinaw. Henry was the first Englishman to venture out into the wilderness after the French had been deposed from its sovereignty. Outside of its interest as a narrative of pure exploration, its chief interest lies in the fact that the early history of Chicago is so intimately connected with that of Mackinaw. Mackinaw for a century was the center of the fur trade of the Great Northwest, and until the beginning of the nineteenth century, all approach to Chicago was through that trading center.

Mr. Quaife has again consented to act as editor and to prepare the historical introduction.

THE PUBLISHERS.

Christmas, 1921.

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## Historical Introduction





## Historical Introduction

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**I**T is the year of our Lord, 1760. Under the masterful leadership of William Pitt, the British Empire is just bringing to a triumphant conclusion the terrible Seven Years' War which for long has deluged a world with blood. From a somewhat narrower point of view this war has been but another round in England's second Hundred-Year Duel with France for the political dominance of the earth. For almost two hundred years the rival mother nations have been fostering in America a New France and a New England. Stretched along the Atlantic coastal plain from Maine to Georgia is the thin line of colonies which go to compose the latter. Encircling these, with one center of settlement on the lower St. Lawrence and the other at the mouth of the Mississippi, two thousand miles away, are the imperial possessions of New France. Although her population is but a handful, and that of the English colonies but a few hundred thousand, around and between which stretches the interminable wilderness sparsely inhabited by scattered tribes of savages, long and repeatedly have the two countries quarreled over the issue as to which shall control and develop that wilderness.

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## Historical Introduction

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The Seven Years' War was the decisive round in this long struggle for the domination of the continent. It began in the backwoods of America with a contest for the possession of the Ohio Valley. It was ended when in the autumn of 1759 a combined land and sea force of twenty-seven thousand Englishmen conquered the citadel of Quebec. The capture of Quebec is one of the decisive struggles of military history. It won for General Wolfe an early grave and an immortal fame; it ended for all time the dream of a greater France, while it gave the future of North America into the keeping of the Anglo-Saxon; it foreshadowed the development of the British Empire on its modern basis, and the birth of the United States as an independent nation.

In the province of New Jersey in 1739 was born a youth since known to fame by the name of Alexander Henry. Of the first twenty years of his life practically nothing is known. Of the succeeding sixteen years, we have his own record in the narrative which follows. The slogan of recent years "Trade follows the Flag" finds ready exemplification in the career of Henry. When, in the summer of 1760, General Amherst's army invaded Canada for the purpose of reducing Montreal and thus ending the war, Henry attached himself to the expedition in a commercial capacity, and at this point begins his narration of "travels and adventures." Disaster promptly overtook him,

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## Historical Introduction

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his boats being wrecked and all his merchandise lost in the rapids of the St. Lawrence. Not long after, he encountered by chance a Frenchman who had spent long years in the Indian country as a trader; and the stories he told of the wealth to be won in the fur trade fired Henry with the determination to proceed to Mackinac and from this center begin the prosecution of this hazardous calling.

Doubly hazardous was it at the time Henry proposed going into the Northwest. Although New France had fallen, the Indian tribes had not been conquered, and they viewed with sullen hostility the approach of the representatives of the nation which had vanquished their French "Father." Under the inspiration and leadership of Pontiac, one of the greatest figures in the history of the Indian race, they rose against the English, and all along the far-flung western frontier the scalping-knife gleamed and the tomahawk descended. Thus Henry, at Mackinac, found himself in the midst of the conflict, and his story of what befell him has been incorporated almost word for word by the master historian, Parkman, in his narrative of the Great Conspiracy.

The war ruined Henry but it did not break his dauntless spirit or satiate his appetite for adventure. Upon its conclusion, therefore, we find him embarking upon the fur trade anew; pioneering for copper in the Lake Superior region, whence in a later century almost untold

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## Historical Introduction

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wealth in mineral was to be drawn; resuming again the fur trade, in pursuit of which he was drawn to the utmost verge of the region known to white men. The recital of these years on Lake Superior and in the far Northwest occupies the second part of our volume; it constitutes a distinct narrative from that contained in Part One, and the two might well have appeared as separate volumes. But as Henry himself put them together in his lifetime, so we reproduce them here, in a single book of travel and adventure.

At the period when his narrative concludes, Henry was a man of but thirty-seven. During his years in the wilderness the quarrel between the English colonies and the Mother Country had arisen and progressed to its culmination at Philadelphia, on the very day that Henry set out upon his return to civilization, in the Declaration of Independence and the birth of the United States. From this succession of events Henry had been as far removed as though upon another planet. Reaching Montreal in the summer of 1776, he set out that same year for England; crossing to France, he was presented at court, and to the day of his death almost half a century later he retained a vivid recollection of the attention bestowed upon him by the beautiful and unfortunate queen, Marie Antoinette.

Thenceforth Montreal was Henry's home, although he made two more voyages to Europe

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## Historical Introduction

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and paid one or more visits to the Indian country. From Montreal he prosecuted for some years the fur trade, conducting, meanwhile, the business of a local merchant. He remained one of the substantial citizens of the place until his death in April, 1824. His eldest son, William, was long prominent in the Canadian fur trade; his second son, Charles, was slain by natives on the Liard River of northwestern Canada, while thus engaged; and a nephew, likewise named Alexander Henry, perished in the Columbia River, having left behind a set of journals, which, unpublished for almost a century, are among the most valuable records of the time and place to which they belong.

With this brief view of our author's career taken, it remains to appraise his book. For the record of the massacre at Mackinac and its attendant events, Henry's work is our only detailed narration. For the period of northwestern trade and exploration described in Part Two, Henry is an early and valuable, although not unique, authority. Occupying such a position in our historical literature, it is obviously a matter of importance to determine what measure of credence may properly be accorded his narrative.

Henry himself offers perhaps the best method of approach to this problem. In his preface he informs us that "the details [of his fur-trade career] *from time to time committed to*

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## Historical Introduction

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*paper*, form the subject matter of the present volume." It is obvious, therefore, that the author did not keep a day-by-day journal of events; and that his narrative as it comes to us is the fruit of his recollections set down at different times during the period of his life subsequent to the conclusion of the travels and adventures which are so vividly described by him. A record thus produced may possess great value, but to all lawyers and all historians it is a commonplace that this value, however great it may be, will be different in quality from that attaching to a day-by-day record of events. The human memory is at best a fallible instrument. Men in later years frequently recall events which never took place; as frequently they transform, in memory, the true character and circumstances attendant upon the occurrence of events; and it is sometimes even possible for an observer to trace the progressive steps in the transformation.

With these considerations in mind, we will not expect to find in Henry's story that accuracy of detail which characterizes the journal of contemporary events. It will not be strange to find that distances are sometimes misstated,<sup>1</sup> that dates given are frequently incorrect, and that the story is subject to

<sup>1</sup> An additional reason for this is, of course, the fact that Henry is commonly giving estimates made by eye,



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## Historical Introduction

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correction in various other respects. But the more important consideration, in appraising the narrative, pertains to quite another question; did Henry desire to set down a truthful record; and was he capable, in general, of doing so?

On this point two opinions have been advanced. In general, Henry's *bona fides* has been accepted by scholars without qualification, following the lead of Parkman. More recently, however, Henry Bedford-Jones, in a booklet published at Santa Barbara, has delivered a sweeping attack upon Henry.<sup>2</sup> The spirit of the accusation is perhaps sufficiently indicated in the following lines of verse which preface the booklet:

Garrulous old trader, sitting with a jorum  
Close beside your elbow, and tobacco blowing free,  
Easy 'tis to picture you, spinning to a quorum  
Of pop-eyed New York burghers your tales of  
deviltry!

How you must have made them palpitate and  
shiver

As you warmed up to your narrative of blood  
and massacre!

How you must have chortled as you saw 'em shake  
and quiver

rather than the precise determinations which result from scientific surveys.

<sup>2</sup> *The myth Wawatam or Alexander Henry Refuted, Being an Exposure of certain Fictions Hitherto Unsuspected of the Public; with which are also found some remarks upon the famous old Fort Michilimackinac \* \* \** (Santa Barbara, 1917.)

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## Historical Introduction

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To your tales of shocking escapades by trail and  
lake and river—

I'm afraid you were a liar, but you knew how to  
deliver

Your auditors of Gotham from the shackles of  
ennui!

In support of this charge of willful mendacity against Henry, the writer calls attention to certain erroneous statements of detail, a form of criticism to which Henry's narrative is clearly vulnerable; but so carelessly have the accusations been drawn that it would be easy to retort upon the critic the very charge he brings against Henry.<sup>3</sup> Not to go farther afield, the sole factual basis for the verse picturing the "garrulous old trader" engaged in spinning his yarns for the entertainment of an audience of "pop-eyed New York burghers" is the single circumstance that his book was published by a New York printer. There is no hint in it—or elsewhere to the present writer's knowledge—that Henry ever lived in New York, or indeed that he ever saw that city.

<sup>3</sup> Thus, Henry's account (in Part One, chap. VII) of his trip from Mackinac to the Soo is described as "ludicrously inaccurate; and from Point Detour, finding the lake open, our hero pushes on and sends back aid—but fails to say how he crossed the open straits." But on turning to Henry's account we find that after the party reached Point Detour a delay of more than a week ensued, as to part of which it is expressly stated that the weather was "exceedingly cold." Only a hyper-critic could require further explanation than this as to how Henry crossed the "open straits."

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Details aside, the most important accusation made by Mr. Jones is that the entire story of Henry's relations with Wawatam and Chief Minavavana is a myth, and that these characters never in fact existed. If this charge be true, then indeed all confidence in Henry's narrative becomes impossible. Looking to the evidence in support of these assertions, however, we find that it practically reduces to this, that Minavavana is unknown outside the pages of Henry. "A son of Matchekewis, captor of Mackinac," says the critic, "told Schoolcraft that the name was entirely strange to him." But when we turn to Schoolcraft for confirmation, we find that his witness was suspicious and unwilling to talk, and that Schoolcraft expressly cites the incident as an illustration of the difficulty of a white man's getting the truth from an Indian!

Criticism of such character as this reveals itself to be is of the stuff of which dreams are made, and unworthy of serious consideration;<sup>4</sup> and a more candid and capable critic must enter the lists before the historical repute of Henry's narrative can be seriously shaken. For myself, I see no sufficient reason for doubting Henry's honesty, and his narrative itself

<sup>4</sup> I have noticed it thus far only because, as far as my knowledge goes, it is the latest publication on the subject of Henry's book, and as yet has evoked no notice or answer. In editing a new edition of Henry, therefore, it seems proper to place his critic's attack in its proper setting.

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## Historical Introduction

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discloses internal evidence of shrewdness and insight on the part of its author. Necessarily, since it is a personal narration, his own doings and point of view receive constant emphasis. For this the intelligent reader will make due allowance, as he will for such errors of precise detail as may disclose themselves. That these should occur in the recital of sixteen years of travel and adventure is inevitable. Equally inevitable is it that the author could not have abandoned himself to willful mendacity without leaving evidences of the habit which would be patent to the scholar who follows on his trail; and when such a scholar as Francis Parkman accords to Henry a certificate of good faith we may be sure that his book is something other than a collection of yarns spun for the delectation of a group of "pop-eyed New York burghers."

From quite another point of view Henry's narrative deserves attention. It is evident that Henry must have received some education, but in his twenty-first year he plunged into the wilderness, not to emerge therefrom for sixteen long years. Such a career is not in close accord with the curriculum laid down in the schools for the training of him who aspires to become a writer. Yet in some mysterious manner Henry had become a master of English and this, his sole production, is literature in the best sense of the term. The shelves of our libraries are loaded down with books, dry

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## Historical Introduction

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as the desert of Sahara, whose authors have devoted their lives to the professed pursuit of learning. But here is a man whose formal education could scarcely have gone beyond the stage of the modern common school, and who for a decade and a half lived in an environment of savagery wherein his life was at no time worth an hour's purchase; yet he has written a book instinct with literary charm and artistry. How was the miracle wrought? I do not profess to know, but I rejoice in the opportunity which is afforded me of helping to give Henry's narrative a wider circulation than it has hitherto had, and of bringing it to a fresh circle of readers.

Henry's book was first published at New York in 1809 with the title "*Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories Between the years 1760 and 1776*." How large the edition was we have no information. Copies of it have now become so rare as to be practically inaccessible to most readers. In 1901 a reprint edition of 700 copies was brought out at Boston and Toronto under the scholarly editing of James Bain. In this reprint the typographical and other peculiarities of the original edition were carefully preserved, so that the text is "almost a facsimile" of the earlier volume. In editing the narrative for the *Lakeside Classics* I have thought proper to adopt a different procedure. While faithfully preserving the author's text and footnotes, no

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## Historical Introduction

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effort has been made to repeat the typographical peculiarities of the original edition, for which, presumably, the printer, rather than the author, was responsible. On the contrary, the punctuation, chapter heads, and other typographical details of this edition are the work of the present editor; and in a few instances, where propriety clearly dictated this course, obvious errors in the text have been corrected. This procedure will not, of course, commend the book to professional scholars, but these have, or can readily gain, access to the original edition; the *Lakeside Classics* are issued for the delectation of a different class of readers. The footnotes of the original edition are distinguished from those supplied by the editor by the signature "author" or "editor" (as the case may be) appended to each note.

MILO M. QUAIFE.

Madison, Wisconsin.

TRAVELS  
AND ADVENTURES  
IN  
CANADA  
AND  
THE INDIAN TERRITORIES  
BETWEEN  
THE YEARS 1760 AND 1776  
IN TWO PARTS

By ALEXANDER HENRY, ESQ.

NEW YORK  
Printed and Published by I. Riley  
1809





DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, ss.

**B**E IT REMEMBERED, That on the twelfth day of October, in the thirty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, ISAAC RILEY, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

“Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, between the years 1760 and 1776. In two parts. By ALEXANDER HENRY, Esq.”

IN CONFORMITY to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned”; and to an act, entitled, “An act, supplementary to an act, entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints.”

CHARLES CLINTON,  
*Clerk of the District of New York.*



To  
The Right Honourable  
SIR JOSEPH BANKS, BARONET;  
Knight - Companion  
of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath;  
one of His Majesty's  
Most Honourable Privy Council;  
President of the Royal Society, F. S. A.  
&c. &c. &c.

THIS VOLUME  
with great deference,  
is most respectfully dedicated,  
By  
his very devoted,  
and very humble servant,  
ALEXANDER HENRY

Montreal, October 20th, 1809.



## Preface

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A PREMATURE attempt to share in the fur trade of Canada, directly on the conquest of the country, led the author of the following pages into situations of some danger and singularity; and the pursuit, under better auspices, of the same branch of commerce, occasioned him to visit various parts of the Indian Territories.

These transactions occupied a period of sixteen years, commencing nearly with the author's setting out in life. The details, from time to time committed to paper, form the subject matter of the present volume.

The heads, under which, for the most part, they will be found to range themselves, are three: first, the incidents or adventures in which the author was engaged; secondly, the observations, on the geography and natural history of the countries visited, which he was able to make, and to preserve; and, thirdly, the views of society and manners, among a part of the Indians of North America, which it has belonged to the course of his narrative to develop.

Upon the last, the author may be permitted to remark, that he has by no means undertaken to write the general history of the American

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## Preface

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Indians, nor any theory of their morals, or their merits. With but few exceptions, it has been the entire scope of his design, simply to relate those particular facts, which are either identified with his own fortunes, or with the truth of which he is otherwise personally conversant. All comment, therefore, in almost all instances, is studiously avoided.

MONTREAL, *October 20th, 1809.*

PART ONE

ADVENTURES IN MICHIGAN, 1760-64





## Chapter 1

### EMBARKING UPON THE FUR TRADE

**I**N the year 1760, when the British arms under General Amherst were employed in the reduction of Canada, I accompanied the expedition which subsequently to the surrender of Quebec<sup>1</sup> descended from Oswego on Lake Ontario against Fort de Levi, one of the upper posts situate on an island which lies on the south side of the great river St. Lawrence, at a short distance below the mouth of the Oswegatchie.<sup>2</sup> Fort de Levi surrendered on the twenty-first day of August, seven days after the commencement of the siege; and General Amherst continued his voyage

<sup>1</sup> Quebec surrendered on the eighteenth of September, 1759.—Author.

<sup>2</sup> Following the capture of Quebec by General Wolfe, the French forces still remaining in the field retired upon Montreal. To complete the conquest of Canada, the British directed, in the summer of 1760, three simultaneous converging expeditions against Montreal. The most formidable of these, led by Amherst, the commander-in-chief, proceeded from Lake Ontario down the St. Lawrence River—an army of about 11,000 men embarked in 800 bateaux and whale-boats. Fort Lévis, near modern Ogdensburgh, N.Y., built by the French in 1759 to guard the western entrance to the St. Lawrence, and garrisoned by 300 men, was taken on August 25 after a brief siege.—Editor.

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## Alexander Henry

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down the stream, carrying his forces against Montreal.

It happened that in this voyage one of the few fatal accidents which are remembered to have occurred in that dangerous part of the river below Lake St. François, called the Rapides des Cédres, befell the British army. Several boats loaded with provisions and military stores were lost, together with upward of a hundred men. I had three boats loaded with merchandise, all of which were lost; and I saved my life only by gaining the bottom of one of my boats, which lay among the rocky shelves, and on which I continued for some hours, and until I was kindly taken off by one of the General's aides-de-camp.

The surrender of Montreal,<sup>3</sup> and with it the surrender of all Canada, followed that of Fort de Levi at only the short interval of three days, and proposing to avail myself of the new market which was thus thrown open to British adventure I hastened to Albany, where my commercial connections were, and where I procured a quantity of goods with which I set out, intending to carry them to Montreal. For this, however, the winter was too near approached; I was able only to return to Fort de Levi (to which the conquerors had now given the name of Fort William Augustus) and where I remained until the month of January in the following year.

<sup>3</sup> Montreal surrendered September 8, 1760.—Editor.

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## Travels and Adventures

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At this time, having disposed of my goods to the garrison and the season for traveling on the snow and ice being set in, I prepared to go down to Montreal. The journey was to be performed through a country inhabited only by Indians and by beasts of the forest, and which presented to the eye no other change than from thick woods to the broad surface of a frozen river. It was necessary that I should be accompanied as well by an interpreter as by a guide, to both of which ends I engaged the services of a Canadian, named Jean Baptiste Bodoine.

The snow which lay upon the ground was by this time three feet in depth. The hour of departure arriving, I left the fort on snowshoes, an article of equipment which I had never used before, and which I found it not a little difficult to manage. I did not avoid frequent falls; and when down I was scarcely able to rise.

At sunset on the first day we reached an Indian encampment of six lodges and about twenty men. As these people had been very recently employed offensively against the English, in the French service, I agreed but reluctantly to the proposal of my guide and interpreter, which was nothing less than that we should pass the night with them. My fears were somewhat lulled by his information that he was personally acquainted with those who composed the camp, and by his assurances

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## Alexander Henry

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that no danger was to be apprehended; and being greatly fatigued, I entered one of the lodges, where I presently fell asleep.

Unfortunately Bodoine had brought upon his back a small keg of rum, which, while I slept, he opened, not only for himself but for the general gratification of his friends; a circumstance of which I was first made aware in being awakened by a kick on the breast from the foot of one of my hosts, and by a yell or Indian cry which immediately succeeded. At the instant of opening my eyes I saw that my assailant was struggling with one of his companions, who, in conjunction with several women, was endeavoring to restrain his ferocity. Perceiving, however, in the countenance of my enemy the most determined mischief, I sprung upon my feet, receiving in so doing a wound in my hand from a knife which had been raised to give a more serious wound. While the rest of my guardians continued their charitable efforts for my protection, an old woman took hold of my arm, and making signs that I should accompany her, led me out of the lodge, and then gave me to understand that unless I fled or could conceal myself I should certainly be killed.

My guide was absent, and without his direction I was at a loss where to go. In all the surrounding lodges there was the same howling and violence as in that from which I had escaped. I was without my snowshoes, and had

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## Travels and Adventures

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only so much clothing as I had fortunately left upon me when I lay down to sleep. It was now one o'clock in the morning in the month of January, and in a climate of extreme rigor.

I was unable to address a single word in her own language to the old woman who had thus befriended me; but on repeating the name of Bodoine, I soon found that she comprehended my meaning; and having first pointed to a large tree, behind which she made signs that until she could find my guide I should hide myself, she left me on this important errand. Meanwhile, I made my way to the tree and seated myself in the snow. From my retreat I beheld several Indians running from one lodge to another, as if to quell the disturbance which prevailed.

The coldness of the atmosphere congealed the blood about my wound and prevented further bleeding; and the anxious state of my mind rendered me almost insensible to bodily suffering. At the end of half an hour I heard myself called by Bodoine, whom, on going to him, I found as much intoxicated and as much a savage as the Indians themselves; but he was, nevertheless, able to fetch my snowshoes from the lodge in which I had left them, and to point out to me a beaten path, which presently entered a deep wood, and which he told me I must follow.

After walking about three miles I heard, at length, the footsteps of my guide, who had now

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overtaken me. I thought it most prudent to abstain from all reproof; and we proceeded on our march till sunrise, when we arrived at a solitary Indian hunting-lodge, built with branches of trees, and of which the only inhabitants were an Indian and his wife. Here the warmth of a large fire reconciled me to a second experiment on Indian hospitality. The result was very different from that of the one which had preceded it; for after relieving my thirst with melted snow and my hunger with a plentiful meal of venison, of which there was a great quantity in the lodge, and which was liberally set before me, I resumed my journey, full of sentiments of gratitude, such as almost obliterated the recollection of what had befallen me among the friends of my benefactors.

From the hunting lodge I followed my guide till evening, when we encamped on the banks of the St. Lawrence, making a fire and supping on the meat with which our wallets had been filled in the morning.

While I indulged myself in rest my guide visited the shore, where he discovered a bark canoe which had been left there in the beginning of the winter by some Indian wayfarers. We were now at the head of the Longue Sault, one of those portions of the river in which it passes over a shallow, inclining, and rocky bed, and where its motion consequently prevents it from freezing, even in the coldest part of the year; and my guide, as soon as he

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had made his discovery, recommended that we should go by water down the rapids, as the means of saving time, of shortening our journey, and of avoiding a numerous body of Indians then hunting on the banks below. The last of these arguments was with me so powerful that though a bark canoe was a vehicle to which I was altogether a stranger, though this was a very small one of only sixteen or eighteen feet in length <sup>4</sup> and much out of repair, and though the misfortune which I had experienced in the navigation of these rocky parts of the St. Lawrence when descending with the army naturally presented itself to my mind as a still further discouragement, yet I was not long in resolving to undertake the voyage.

Accordingly, after stopping the leaks as completely as we were able we embarked and proceeded. My fears were not lessened by perceiving that the least unskilful motion was sufficient to upset the ticklish craft into which I had ventured; by the reflection that a shock comparatively gentle from a mass of rock or ice was more than its frail material could sustain; nor by observing that the ice, which lined the shores of the river, was too strong to be pushed through and at the same time too weak to be walked upon, so that in the event of disaster it would be almost impossible to reach the land. In fact, we had not

<sup>4</sup> There are still smaller.—Author.



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proceeded more than a mile when our canoe became full of water, and it was not till after a long search that we found a place of safety.

Treading once more upon dry ground, I should willingly have faced the wilderness and all its Indians rather than embark again; but my guide informed me that I was upon an island, and I had therefore no choice before me. We stopped the leaks a second time and recommenced our voyage, which we performed with success, but sitting all the way in six inches of water. In this manner we arrived at the foot of the rapids, where the river was frozen all across. Here we disembarked upon the ice, walked to the bank, made a fire, and *encamped*; for such is the phrase employed in the woods of Canada.

At daybreak the next morning we put on our snowshoes and commenced our journey over the ice; and at ten o'clock arrived in sight of Lake St. François, which is from four to six miles in breadth. The wind was high and the snow, drifting over the expanse, prevented us at times from discovering the land, and consequently (for compass we had none) from pursuing with certainty our course.

Toward noon the storm became so violent that we directed our steps to the shore on the north side by the shortest route we could; and making a fire, dined on the remains of the Indian hunter's bounty. At two o'clock in the afternoon, when the wind had subsided and



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the atmosphere grown more clear, I discerned a cariole, or sledge, moving our way, and immediately sent my guide to the driver with a request that he would come to my encampment. On his arrival I agreed with him to carry me to Les Cédres, a distance of eight leagues, for a reward of eight dollars. The driver was a Canadian who had been to the Indian village of St. Regis, and was now on his return to Les Cédres, then the uppermost white settlement on the St. Lawrence.

Late in the evening I reached Les Cédres, and was carried to the house of M. Leduc, its seignior, by whom I was politely and hospitably received. M. Leduc being disposed to converse with me, it became a subject of regret that neither party understood the language of the other; but an interpreter was fortunately found in the person of a serjeant of His Majesty's Eighteenth Regiment of Foot.

I now learned that M. Leduc in the earlier part of his life had been engaged in the fur trade with the Indians of Michilimackinac and Lake Superior. He informed me of his acquaintance with the Indian languages and his knowledge of furs, and gave me to understand that Michilimackinac was richer in this commodity than any other part of the world. He added that the Indians were a peaceable race of men, and that an European might travel from one side of the continent to the other

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without experiencing insult. Further, he mentioned that a guide who lived at no great distance from his house could confirm the truth of all that he had advanced.

I, who had previously thought of visiting Michilimackinac with a view to the Indian trade, gave the strictest attention to all that fell on this subject from my host; and in order to possess myself as far as possible of all that might be collected in addition, I requested that the guide should be sent for. This man arrived, and a short conversation terminated in my engaging him to conduct myself, and the canoes which I was to procure, to Michilimackinac in the month of June following.

There being at this time no goods in Montreal adapted to the Indian trade, my next business was to proceed to Albany to make my purchases there. This I did in the beginning of the month of May, by the way of Lake Champlain; and on the fifteenth of June arrived again in Montreal, bringing with me my outfits. As I was altogether a stranger to the commerce in which I was engaging, I confided in the recommendations given me of one Etienne Campion,<sup>5</sup> as my assistant; a part which

<sup>5</sup> Etienne Campion, a native of Montreal, was for several decades a prominent trader in the western country. During the Revolution he was an active British partisan in the Northwest. When, in December, 1780, the little raiding party of Cahokians fell upon St. Joseph, Michigan, and plundered the traders there, Campion led the party of pursuers that was

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he uniformly fulfilled with honesty and fidelity.

His Excellency, General Gage, who now commanded in chief in Canada, very reluctantly granted me the permission at this time requisite for going to Michilimackinac. No treaty of peace had yet been made between the English and the Indians, which latter were in arms under Pontiac, an Indian leader of more than common celebrity, and General Gage was therefore strongly and (as it became manifest) but too justly apprehensive that both the property and lives of His Majesty's subjects would be very insecure in the Indian countries. But he had already granted such permission to a Mr. Bostwick,<sup>6</sup> and this I was able to employ as an argument against his refusal in respect to myself. General Gage complied, and on the third day of August,

hastily formed and in the battle which ensued, December 5, 1780, somewhere in the vicinity of South Chicago, all but three of the raiders were killed or captured. Campion's name appears in numerous Mackinac documents coming down to the year 1794.—Editor.

<sup>6</sup> This was Henry Bostwick, the first English trader to go to Mackinac after the surrender of Montreal. Although in August, 1761, he is reported as being at Detroit (Diary of Sir William Johnson), he seems to have made Mackinac his permanent headquarters. He was captured here by the Chippewa, in June, 1763, and carried by the Ottawa to Montreal for ransom. Various documents show his residence at Mackinac in the following years; among others, he was a signer in 1781 of the treaty whereby Governor Patrick Sinclair purchased Mackinac Island from the natives.—Editor.

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1761, after some further delay in obtaining a passport from the town-major, I dispatched my canoes to Lachine, there to take in their lading.

## Chapter 2

### THE VOYAGE TO MACKINAC

THE inland navigation from Montreal to Michilimackinac may be performed either by the way of Lakes Ontario and Erie, or by the river Des Outaouais, Lake Nipissingue, and the river Des Français,<sup>7</sup> for as well by one as the other of these routes we are carried to Lake Huron. The second is the shortest and that which is usually pursued by the canoes employed in the Indian trade.

The canoes which I provided for my undertaking were, as is usual, five fathoms and a half in length and four feet and a half in their extreme breadth, and formed of birch-tree bark a quarter of an inch in thickness. The bark is lined with small splints of cedar-wood; and the vessel is further strengthened with ribs of the same wood, of which the two ends are fastened to the gunwales; several bars, rather than seats, are also laid across the canoe, from gunwale to gunwale. The small roots of the spruce tree afford the wattap, with which the bark is sewed; and the gum of the pine tree supplies the place of tar and oakum. Bark, some spare wattap, and gum are always

<sup>7</sup> The Ottawa River, Lake Nipissing and French River.—Editor.

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carried in each canoe for the repairs which frequently become necessary.

The canoes are worked, not with oars but with paddles, and occasionally with a sail. To each canoe there are eight men; and to every three or four canoes, which constitute a brigade, there is a guide or conductor. Skilful men, at double the wages of the rest, are placed in the head and stern. They engage to go from Montreal to Michilimackinac and back to Montreal again, the middle-men at one hundred and fifty livres and the end-men at three hundred livres each.<sup>8</sup> The guide has the command of his brigade and is answerable for all pillage and loss; and in return every man's wages is answerable to him. This regulation was established under the French government.

The freight of a canoe of the substance and dimensions which I have detailed consists in sixty *pieces*, or packages of merchandise, of the weight of from ninety to a hundred pounds each, and provisions to the amount of one thousand weight. To this is to be added the weight of eight men and of eight bags weighing forty pounds each, one of which every man is privileged to put on board. The whole weight must therefore exceed eight thousand pounds, or may perhaps be averaged at four tons.

The nature of the navigation which is to be

<sup>8</sup> These particulars may be compared with those of a more modern date, given in the *Voyages* of Sir Alexander Mackenzie.—Author.

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described will sufficiently explain why the canoe is the only vessel which can be employed along its course. The necessity, indeed, becomes apparent at the very instant of our departure from Montreal itself.

The St. Lawrence for several miles immediately above Montreal descends with a rapid current over a shallow, rocky bed; insomuch that even canoes themselves, when loaded, cannot resist the stream, and are therefore sent empty to Lachine, where they meet the merchandise which they are to carry, and which is transported thither by land.<sup>9</sup> Lachine is about nine miles higher up the river than Montreal, and is at the head of the Sault de St. Louis, which is the highest of the saults, falls, or leaps in this part of the St. Lawrence.

On the third of August I sent my canoes to Lachine, and on the following morning embarked with them for Michilimackinac. The river is here so broad as to be denominated a lake, by the title of Lake St. Louis; the prospect is wide and cheerful; and the village has several well-built houses.

In a short time we reached the rapids and carrying-place of St. Anne, two miles below

<sup>9</sup> La Chine, or China, has always been the point of departure for the upper countries. It owes its name to the expeditions of M. de la Salle which were fitted out at this place for the discovery of a northwest passage to China.—Author.

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the upper end of the island of Montreal; and it is not till after passing these that the voyage may be properly said to be commenced. At St. Anne's the men go to confession, and at the same time offer up their vows; for the saint from whom this parish derives its name and to whom its church is dedicated, is the patroness of the Canadians in all their travels by water.<sup>10</sup>

There is still a further custom to be observed on arriving at St. Anne's, and which is that of distributing eight gallons of rum to each canoe (a gallon for each man) for consumption during the voyage; nor is it less according to custom to drink the whole of this liquor upon the spot. The saint, therefore, and the priest were no sooner dismissed than a scene of intoxication began in which my men surpassed, if possible, the drunken Indian in singing, fighting, and the display of savage gesture and conceit. In the morning we reloaded the canoes

<sup>10</sup> Peter Pond, a Connecticut Yankee who went out to the western country as a trader in 1773, thus quaintly describes this aspect of the journey: "As you Pass the End of the Island of Montreal to Go in a Small Lake Cald the Lake of the [Two] Mountains thare stans a Small Roman Church Aganst a Small Raped. This Church is Dedacated to St. Ann who Protects all Voigers. Heare is a small Box with a Hole in the top for ye Reseption of a Little Money for the Hole Father or to say a small Mass for those Who Put a small Sum in the Box. Scars a Voiger but stops hear and Puts in his mite and By that Meanes thay Suppose thay are Protected."—*Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII, 326.—Editor.



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and pursued our course across the Lake des Deux Montagnes.

This lake, like that of St. Louis, is only a part of the estuary of the Outaouais, which here unites itself with the St. Lawrence, or rather, according to some, the Cataraqui; for, with these, the St. Lawrence is formed by the confluence of the Cataraqui and Outaouais.<sup>11</sup>

At noon we reached the Indian Mission of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, situate on the north bank of the lake, with its two villages, Algonquin and Iroquois, in each of which was reckoned an hundred souls. Here we received a hospitable reception and remained during two hours. I was informed by one of the missionaries that since the conquest of the country the unrestrained introduction of spirituous liquors at this place, which had not been allowed under the former government, had occasioned many outrages.

At two o'clock in the afternoon we prosecuted our voyage; and at sunset disembarked and encamped at the foot of the Longue Sault. There is a Longue Sault both on this river and on the St. Lawrence.

At ten leagues above the island of Montreal I passed the limits of the cultivated lands on the north bank of the Outaouais. On the

<sup>11</sup> This is the *Utawas* of some writers, the *Ottaway* of others, etc., etc., etc. It is also called the Grand River —la Grande Rivière.—Author.

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south, the farms are very few in number, but the soil has every appearance of fertility.<sup>12</sup>

In ascending the Longue Sault, a distance of three miles, my canoes were three times unladen, and together with their freight carried on the shoulders of the voyageurs. The rocky carrying-places are not crossed without danger of serious accidents by men bearing heavy burdens.

The Longue Sault being passed, the Outaouais presented on either side only scenes of primitive forest, the common range of the deer, the wolf, the bear, and the Indian. The current is here gentle. The lands upon the south are low, and when I passed them were overflowed; but on the northern side the banks are dry and elevated, with much meadow land at their feet. The grass in some places was high. Several islands are in this part of the river. Among the fish, of which there are abundance, are catfish of a large size.

At fourteen leagues above the Longue Sault we reached a French fort, or trading house, surrounded by a stockade. Attached was a small garden from which we procured some vegetables. The house had no inhabitant. At three leagues farther is the mouth of the Hare River, which descends from the north, and here we passed another trading house. At a few leagues still higher on the south bank is the mouth of a river four hundred yards

<sup>12</sup> Numerous and thriving colonists are now enjoying that fertility—1809.—Author.

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wide, and which falls into the Outaouais perpendicularly from the edge of a rock forty feet high. The appearance of this fall has procured for it the name of the rideau, or curtain; and hence the river itself is called the Rideau, or Rivière du Rideau. The fall presented itself to my view with extraordinary beauty and magnificence, and decorated with a variety of colors.

Still ascending the Outaouais, at three leagues from the fall of the Rideau is that of La Grande Chaudière,<sup>13</sup> a phenomenon of a different aspect. Here, on the north side of the river, is a deep chasm running across the channel for about two hundred yards, from twenty-five to thirty feet in depth and without apparent outlet. In this receptacle a large portion of the river falls perpendicularly with a loud noise, and amid a cloud of spray and vapor, but embellished from time to time with the bright and gorgeous rainbow. The river at this place is a mile in width. In the rainy season the depth of the fall is lessened by reason of the large quantity of water which is received into the chasm, and which for want, as it would seem, of a sufficient drain, in part, fills it up. At such times an eddy and an accumulation of foam at a particular chasm have led me to suspect the existence of an opening beneath through which the water finds a subterranean passage. The rock which forms the

<sup>13</sup> La Grande Chaudière, i. e. the Great Kettle.—  
Author.

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bed of the river appears to be split in an oblique direction from one shore to the other; and the chasm on the north side is only a more perfect breach.

The fall of La Grande Chaudière is more than twenty leagues above the Longue Sault. Its name is justified both by its form and by the vapor, or steam, which ascends from it. Above it there are several islands, of which the land is higher at the upper than at the lower extremities. The carrying-place is not more than a quarter of a mile in length, over a smooth rock, and so near the fall that the men in passing are wetted by the spray. From this carrying-place to another of rather more length, called the Portage de la Chaudière and sometimes the Second Chaudière, is only three miles.

In this part of the voyage I narrowly escaped a fatal accident. A thunder-gust having obliged us to make the shore, the men went into the woods for shelter while I remained in my canoe under a covering of bark. The canoe had been intended to be sufficiently drawn aground; but to my consternation it was not long before, while thus left alone, I perceived it to be adrift and going with the current toward La Grande Chaudière. Happily I made a timely discovery of my situation, and getting out in shallow water was enabled by the assistance of the men, who soon heard my call, to save my property along with my life.

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At twelve miles from the second Portage de la Chaudière there is a third Chaudière, but also called the Portage des Chênes. The name of this carrying-place is derived from the oak trees with which it abounds. It is half a mile in length, level, and of an agreeable aspect.

The bed of the river is here very broad for a space of twelve leagues, or thirty-six miles; and in this part of its course it is called Lake des Chaudières, a name derived from the falls below. The current in this place is scarcely perceptible. The lands on either side are high and the soil is good. At the head of Lake des Chaudières is the Portage des Châts. The carrying-place is a high, uneven rock of difficult access. The ridge of rock crosses the stream and occasions not only one but numerous falls, separated from each other by islands and affording a scene of very pleasing appearance. At the distance of a mile seven openings present themselves to the eye along a line of two miles, which at this point is the breadth of the river. At each opening is a fall of water of about thirty feet in height, and which from the whiteness of its foam might be mistaken for a snowbank. Above, for six miles there are many islands, between which the current is strong. To overcome the difficulties of this part of the navigation the canoes first carry one-half of their loading, and at a second trip the remainder.

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Above the islands the river is six miles in width, and is called Lake des Châts. The lake, so called, is thirty miles long. The lands about the lake are like those of Lake des Chaudières; but higher up they are both high and rocky, and covered with no other wood than spruce and stunted pine.

While paddling against the gentle current of Lake des Châts we met several canoes of Indians returning from their winter's hunt to their village at the Lake des Deux Montagnes. I purchased some of their maple sugar and beaver skins in exchange for provisions. They wished for rum, which I declined to sell them; but they behaved civilly, and we parted as we had met, in a friendly manner. Before they left us they inquired of my men whether or not I was an Englishman, and being told that I was, they observed that the English were mad in their pursuit of beaver, since they could thus expose their lives for it; "for," added they, "the Upper Indians will certainly kill him," meaning myself. These Indians had left their village before the surrender of Montreal and I was the first Englishman they had seen.

In conversation with my men I learned that the Algonquins of the Lake des Deux Montagnes, of which description were the party that I had now met, claim all the lands on the Outaouais as far as Lake Nipissingue; and that these lands are subdivided between their

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several families upon whom they have devolved by inheritance. I was also informed that they are exceedingly strict as to the rights of property in this regard, accounting an invasion of them an offense sufficiently great to warrant the death of the invader.

We now reached the channels of the Grand Calumet, which lie amid numerous islands, and are about twenty miles in length. In this distance there are four carrying-places,<sup>14</sup> besides three or four *décharges*,<sup>15</sup> or discharges, which are places where the merchandise only is carried, and are therefore distinguishable from portages, or carrying-places where the canoe itself is taken out of the water and transported on men's shoulders. The four carrying-places included in the channels are short, with the exception of one, called the Portage de la Montagne, at which, besides its length, there is an acclivity of a hundred feet.

On the tenth of July <sup>16</sup> we reached the Portage du Grand Calumet, which is at the head of the channels of the same name, and which name is derived from the *pièrre à Calumet*,<sup>17</sup> or pipe-stone, which here interrupts the river,

<sup>14</sup> Portage Dufort, etc.—Author.

<sup>15</sup> Décharge des Sables, etc.—Author.

<sup>16</sup> The month was now August.—Editor.

<sup>17</sup> The *pièrre à Calumet* is a compact limestone, yielding easily to the knife, and therefore employed for the bowls of tobacco pipes, both by the Indians and Canadians.—Author.



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occasioning a fall of water. This carrying-place is long and arduous, consisting in a high steep hill, over which the canoe cannot be carried by fewer than twelve men. The method of carrying the packages, or *pieces*, as they are called, is the same with that of the Indian women, and which indeed is not peculiar even to them. One piece rests and hangs upon the shoulders, being suspended in a fillet, or forehead-band; and upon this is laid a second, which usually falls into the hollow of the neck, and assists the head in its support of the burden.

The ascent of this carrying-place is not more fatiguing than the descent is dangerous; and in performing it accidents too often occur, producing strains, ruptures, and injuries for life.<sup>18</sup>

The carrying-place and the repairs of our canoes, which cost us a day, detained us till the thirteenth. It is usual for the canoes to leave the Grand Calumet in good repair; the rapids, or shallow rocky parts of the channel (from which the canoes sustain the chief injury) being now passed, the current becomes gentle, and the carrying-places less frequent. The lands above the carrying-places and near the water are low, and in the spring entirely inundated.

<sup>18</sup> A charitable fund is now established in Montreal for the relief of disabled and decayed voyageurs.—Author.



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On the morning of the fourteenth we reached a trading fort, or house, surrounded by a stockade, which had been built by the French, and at which the quantity of peltries received was once not inconsiderable. For twenty miles below this house the borders of the river are peculiarly well adapted to cultivation. From some Indians who were encamped near the house I purchased fish, dried and fresh.

At the rapids called Des Allumettes are two short carrying-places, above which is the *Rivière Creuse*,<sup>19</sup> twenty-six miles in length, where the water flows with a gentle current at the foot of a high, mountainous, barren and rocky country on the north, and has a low and sandy soil on the south. On this southern side is a remarkable point of sand, stretching far into the stream, and on which it is customary to baptize novices. Above the River Creuse are the two carrying-places of the length of half a mile each, called the Portages des Deux Joachins; and at fifteen miles farther, at the mouth of the River Du Moine is another fort, or trading-house, where I found a small encampment of Indians called Maskegons, and with whom I bartered several articles for furs. They anxiously inquired whether or not the English were in possession of the country below, and whether or not, if they were, they would allow traders to come to that trading-house; declaring that their families must starve

<sup>19</sup> Called by the English Deep River.—Author.

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unless they should be able to procure ammunition and other necessities. I answered both these questions in the affirmative, at which they expressed much satisfaction. Above the Moine are several strong and dangerous rapids, reaching to the Portage du Roche Capitaine, a carrying-place of three-quarters of a mile in length, mountainous, rocky, and wooded only with stunted pine trees and spruce. Above this is the Portage des Deux Rivières, so called from the two small rivers by which it is intersected; and higher still are many rapids and shoals, called by the Indians *matawa*.<sup>20</sup> Here the river, called by the French Petite Rivière, and by the Indians Matawa Sipi,<sup>21</sup> falls into the Outaouais. We now left the latter of these rivers and proceeded to ascend the Matawa.

<sup>20</sup> Mataouan (Matawan); Charlevoix; Matawoen.—Mackenzie's *Voyages*.—Author.

<sup>21</sup> Modern Matawan River.—Editor.

## Chapter 3

### ARRIVAL AT MACKINAC

OUR course in ascending the Outaouais had been west-northwest; but on entering the Matawa our faces were turned to the southwest. This latter river is computed to be fourteen leagues in length. In the widest parts it is a hundred yards broad, and in others not more than fifty. In ascending it there are fourteen carrying-places and discharges, of which some are extremely difficult. Its banks are almost two continuous rocks, with scarcely earth enough for the burial of a dead body. I saw Indian graves, if graves they might be called, where the corpse was laid upon the bare rock and covered with stones. In the side of a hill on the north side of the river there is a curious cave concerning which marvelous tales are related by the voyageurs. Mosquitoes and a minute species of black fly abound on this river, the latter of which are still more troublesome than the former. To obtain a respite from their vexations we were obliged at the carrying-places to make fires and stand in the smoke.

On the twenty-sixth of August we reached the Portages à la Vase, three in number, and

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each two miles in length. Their name<sup>22</sup> describes the boggy ground of which they consist. In passing one of them we saw many beaver houses and dams; and by breaking one of the dams we let off water enough to float our canoes down a small stream which would not otherwise have been navigable. These carrying-places and the intermediate navigation brought us at length to the head of a small river which falls into Lake Nipissingue. We had now passed the country of which the streams fall northeastward into the Outaouais, and entered that from which they flow in a contrary direction toward Lake Huron. On one side of the height of land, which is the reciprocal boundary of these regions, we had left Lake aux Tourtres and the River Matawa; and before us on the other was Lake Nipissingue. The banks of the little river by which we descended into the lake, and more especially as we approached the lake, were of an exceedingly delightful appearance, covered with high grass and affording an extensive prospect. Both the lake and river abound in black bass, sturgeon, pike, and other fish. Among the pike is to be included the species called by the Indians *masquinonge*.<sup>23</sup> In two hours with the

<sup>22</sup> *Vase* is the French equivalent of mud or slime.—Editor.

<sup>23</sup> Known to sportsmen of the present day as the Muskellunge.—Editor.

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assistance of an Indian we took as much fish as all the party could eat.

Lake Nipissingue is distant two hundred leagues from Montreal. Its circumference is said to measure one hundred and fifty miles, and its depth is sufficient for vessels of any burden. On our voyage along its eastern banks we met some canoes of Indians, who said they lived on the northwestern side. My men informed me that they were Nipissingues, a name which they derive from the lake. Their language is a dialect of the Algonquin; and by nation they are a mixture of Chippewa and Maskegons. They had a large quantity of furs, part of which I purchased. The animals which the country affords them are the beaver, marten, bear and o'tic, a'tic, or caribou, a species of deer, by some called the reindeer. They wished for rum, but I avoided selling or giving them any.

Leaving the Indians, we proceeded to the mouth of the lake at which is the carrying-place of La Chaudière Française,<sup>24</sup> a name part of which it has obtained from the holes in the rock over which we passed; and which holes, being of the kind which is known to be formed by water with the assistance of pebbles, demonstrate that it has not always been dry as at present it is, but the phenomenon is not peculiar to this spot, the same being observable at almost every carrying-

<sup>24</sup> Or, *la Chaudière des Français*.—Author.

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place on the Outaouais. At the height of a hundred feet above the river I commonly found pebbles worn into a round form like those upon the beach below. Everywhere the water appears to have subsided from its ancient levels; and imagination may anticipate an era at which even the banks of Newfoundland will be left bare.

The southern shores of Lake Nipissingue are rocky, and only thinly covered with pine trees and spruce, both, as in several instances already mentioned, of a small stature. The carrying-place of La Chaudière Française is at the head of the River des Français, and where the water first descends from the level of Lake Nipissingue toward that of Lake Huron. This it does not reach till it has passed down many rapids, full of danger to the canoes and the men, after which it enters Lake Huron by several arms, flowing through each as through mill-race. The River des Français<sup>25</sup> is twenty leagues in length and has many islands in its channel. Its banks are uniformly of rock. Among the carrying-places at which we successively arrived are the Portage des Pins, or du Pin; de la Grande Faucille;<sup>26</sup> de la Petite Faucille; and du Sault du Recolet.<sup>27</sup> Near the

<sup>25</sup> Modern French River.—Editor.

<sup>26</sup> *Faucille*, Fr. a sickle.—Author.

<sup>27</sup> So called, perhaps, on account of the resemblance of this Sault to that of the Sault du Recolet, between

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mouth of the river a meadow, called La Prairie des Français, varies for a short space the rocky surface which so generally prevails; and on this spot we encamped and repaired our canoes. The carrying-places were now all passed, and what remained was to cross the billows of Lake Huron, which lay stretched across our horizon like an ocean.

On the thirty-first day of August we entered the lake, the waves running high from the south, and breaking over numerous rocks. At first I thought the prospect alarming; but the canoes rode on the water with the ease of a sea-bird, and my apprehensions ceased. We passed Point aux Grondines, so called from the perpetual noise of the water among the rocks. Many of these rocks are sunken and not without danger when the wind, as at this time it was, is from the south.

We coasted along many small islands, or rather rocks, of more or less extent, either wholly bare or very scantily covered with scrub pine trees. All the land to the northward is of the same description as high as Cha'ba'-Bou'an'ing, where verdure reappears.

On the following day we reached an island called La Cloche, because there is here a rock standing on a plain, which, being struck, rings like a bell.

the islands of Montreal and Jesus, and which has its name from the death of a Recolet or Franciscan friar, who was there drowned.—Author.

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I found the island inhabited by a large village of Indians, whose behavior was at first full of civility and kindness. I bartered away some small articles among them in exchange for fish and dried meat; and we remained upon friendly terms till, discovering that I was an Englishman, they told my men that the Indians at Michilimackinac would not fail to kill me, and that therefore they had a right to a share of the pillage. Upon this principle, as they said, they demanded a keg of rum, adding that if not given them they would proceed to take it. I judged it prudent to comply; on condition, however, that I should experience at this place no further molestation.

The condition was not unfaithfully observed; but the repeated warnings which I had now received of sure destruction at Michilimackinac could not but oppress my mind. I could not even yield myself, without danger, to the course suggested by my fears; for my provisions were nearly exhausted and to return was, therefore, almost impracticable.

The hostility of the Indians was exclusively against the English. Between them and my Canadian attendants there appeared the most cordial good-will. This circumstance suggested one means of escape, of which by the advice of my friend Campion I resolved to attempt availing myself; and which was that of putting on the dress usually worn by such of the Canadians as pursue the trade into which I had



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entered and assimilating myself as much as I was able to their appearance and manners. To this end I laid aside my English clothes and covered myself only with a cloth passed about the middle, a shirt hanging loose, a molton, or blanket coat, and a large, red, milled worsted cap. The next thing was to smear my face and hands with dirt and grease; and this done, I took the place of one of my men, and when Indians approached, used the paddle with as much skill as I possessed. I had the satisfaction to find that my disguise enabled me to pass several canoes without attracting the smallest notice.

In this manner I pursued my voyage to the mouth, or rather mouths, of the Missisaki, a river which descends from the north, and of which the name imports that it has several mouths, or outlets. From this river all the Indians inhabiting the north side of Lake Huron are called *Missisakies*. There is here a plentiful sturgeon fishery, by which those that resort to it are fed during the summer months. On our voyage we met several Missisakies of whom we bought fish, and from whose stock we might easily have filled all our canoes.

From the Missisaki, which is on the north shore of Lake Huron, to Michilimackinac, which is on the south, is reckoned thirty leagues. The lake, which here approaches Lake Superior, is now contracted in its breadth, as well as filled with islands. From the mouth

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of the River des Français to the Missisaki is reckoned fifty leagues, with many islands along the route. The lands everywhere from the Island of La Cloche are poor, with the exception of those of the Island of Manitoulin, a hundred miles in length,<sup>28</sup> where they are generally good. On all the islands the Indians cultivate small quantities of maize.

From the Missisaki we proceeded to the O'tossalon<sup>29</sup> and thence across the lake, making one island after another, at intervals of from two to three leagues. The lake, as far as it could be seen, tended to the westward and became less and less broad.

The first land which we made on the south shore was that called Point du Détour,<sup>30</sup> after

<sup>28</sup> The *Isle Manitoulin* was formerly so described. It is now known that there is no island in Lake Huron of a hundred miles in length, and that the *Manitoulin* are a chain of islands. The French writers on Canada speak of the *Isle Manitoulin* as inhabited in their time by the Amikoues (Amicways, Amicwac), whom they called a family (and sometimes a nation), deriving its origin from the Great Beaver, a personage of mythological importance. The name *Manitoulin* implies the residence of *Manitoes*, or genii, a distinction very commonly attributed to the islands, and sometimes to the shores, of Lakes Huron and Superior, and of which further examples will present themselves in the course of these pages.—Author.

<sup>29</sup> Also written Tessalon, Thessalon, and des Tessalons.—Author.

<sup>30</sup> Point du Détour, or Grand Détour, is the eastern extremity of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. *Isle aux Outardes* is modern Goose Island.—Editor.

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which we passed the island called Isle aux Outardes, and then leaving on the right the deep bay of Boutchitaouy came to the island of Michilimackinac, distant from Isle aux Outardes three leagues. On our way a sudden squall reduced us to the point of throwing over the cargoes of our canoes to save the latter from filling; but the wind subsided and we reached the island in safety.

The land in the center of this island is high and its form somewhat resembles that of a turtle's back. *Mackinac*, or *Mickinac*, signifies a *turtle*, and *michi* (*mishi*), or *missi*, signifies *great*, as it does also *several*, or *many*. The common interpretation of the word *Michilimackinac* is the Great Turtle. It is from this island that the fort, commonly known by the name of Michilimackinac, has obtained its appellation.<sup>31</sup>

On the island, as I had been previously taught to expect, there was a village of

<sup>31</sup> This is, perhaps, debatable. It is important for the modern reader to remember that the term Mackinac has been applied at different times to different points in the region adjoining the head of Lake Michigan. In the time of Marquette, Mackinac was on the north side of the strait, upon Point St. Ignace. From 1712 to 1781 it was on the south side of the strait, in the immediate vicinity of modern Mackinaw City. In 1781 Governor Sinclair established his British garrison on the island of Mackinac, where the modern resort city stands. Thus the Mackinac to which Henry came in 1761, and where the massacre occurred in 1763, was on the southern mainland near modern Mackinaw City.—Editor.

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Chippewa, said to contain a hundred warriors. Here I was fearful of discovery and consequent ill-treatment, but after inquiring the news, and particularly whether or not any Englishman was coming to Michilimackinac, they suffered us to pass uninjured. One man, indeed, looked at me, laughed, and pointed me out to another. This was enough to give me some uneasiness; but whatever was the singularity he perceived in me, both he and his friend retired without suspecting me to be an Englishman.

## Chapter 4

### RECEPTION AT MACKINAC

LEAVING as speedily as possible the island of Michilimackinac I crossed the strait and landed at the fort of the same name. The distance from the island is about two leagues. I landed at four o'clock in the afternoon.

Here I put the entire charge of my effects into the hands of my assistant, Campion, between whom and myself it had been previously agreed that he should pass for the proprietor; and my men were instructed to conceal the fact that I was an Englishman.

Campion soon found a house to which I retired, and where I hoped to remain in privacy; but the men soon betrayed my secret, and I was visited by the inhabitants with great show of civility. They assured me that I could not stay at Michilimackinac without the most imminent risk; and strongly recommended that I should lose no time in making my escape to Detroit.

Though language like this could not but increase my uneasiness it did not shake my determination to remain with my property and encounter the evils with which I was threatened; and my spirits were in some measure sustained

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by the sentiments of Campion in this regard; for he declared his belief that the Canadian inhabitants of the fort were more hostile than the Indians as being jealous of English traders, who like myself were penetrating into the country.

Fort Michilimackinac was built by order of the governor-general of Canada, and garrisoned with a small number of militia, who, having families, soon became less soldiers than settlers. Most of those whom I found in the fort had originally served in the French army.

The fort stands on the south side of the strait which is between Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. It has an area of two acres, and is enclosed with pickets of cedar wood;<sup>32</sup> and it is so near the water's edge that when the wind is in the west the waves break against the stockade. On the bastions are two small pieces of brass English cannon taken some years since by a party of Canadians who went on a plundering expedition against the posts of Hudson's Bay, which they reached by the route of the River Churchill.

Within the stockade are thirty houses, neat in their appearance, and tolerably commodious; and a church in which mass is celebrated by a Jesuit missionary. The number of families may be nearly equal to that of the houses; and their subsistence is derived from the Indian traders who assemble here in their voyages to

<sup>32</sup> *Thuja occidentalis*.—Author.

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and from Montreal. Michilimackinac is the place of deposit and point of departure between the upper countries and the lower. Here the outfits are prepared for the countries of Lake Michigan and the Mississippi, Lake Superior, and the Northwest; and here the returns in furs are collected and embarked for Montreal.

I was not released from the visits and admonitions of the inhabitants of the fort before I received the equivocal intelligence that the whole band of Chipewa from the island of Michilimackinac was arrived with the intention of paying me a visit.

There was in the fort one Farley, an interpreter, lately in the employ of the French commandant. He had married a Chipewa woman and was said to possess great influence over the nation to which his wife belonged. Doubtful as to the kind of visit which I was about to receive I sent for this interpreter and requested first that he would have the kindness to be present at the interview, and secondly that he would inform me of the intentions of the band. M. Farley agreed to be present; and as to the object of the visit, replied that it was consistent with uniform custom that a stranger on his arrival should be waited upon and welcomed by the chiefs of the nation, who on their part always gave a small present, and always expected a large one; but as to the rest, declared himself unable to answer for the particular

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views of the Chipewa on this occasion, I being an Englishman, and the Indians having made no treaty with the English. He thought that there might be danger, the Indians having protested that they would not suffer an Englishman to remain in their part of the country. This information was far from agreeable; but there was no resource, except in fortitude and patience.

At two o'clock in the afternoon the Chipewa came to my house, about sixty in number, and headed by Minavavana, their chief. They walked in single file, each with his tomahawk in one hand and scalping knife in the other. Their bodies were naked from the waist upward, except in a few examples where blankets were thrown loosely over the shoulders. Their faces were painted with charcoal, worked up with grease; their bodies with white clay in patterns of various fancies. Some had feathers thrust through their noses, and their heads decorated with the same. It is unnecessary to dwell on the sensations with which I beheld the approach of this uncouth, if not frightful assemblage.

The chief entered first, and the rest followed without noise. On receiving a sign from the former, the latter seated themselves on the floor.

Minavavana<sup>33</sup> appeared to be about fifty years of age. He was six feet in height, and

<sup>33</sup> This chief, who figures so prominently in Henry's story, has commonly been identified by historians as



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had in his countenance an indescribable mixture of good and evil. Looking steadfastly at me where I sat in ceremony, with an interpreter on either hand, and several Canadians behind me, he entered at the same time into conversation with Campion, inquiring how long it was since I left Montreal, and observing that the English, as it would seem, were brave men and not afraid of death, since they dared to come as I had done fearlessly among their enemies.

The Indians now gravely smoked their pipes, while I inwardly endured the tortures of suspense. At length the pipes being finished, as well as the long pause by which they were succeeded, Minavavana, taking a few strings of wampum in his hand, began the following speech:

“Englishman, it is to you that I speak, and I demand your attention!

“Englishman, you know that the French king is our father. He promised to be such; and we in return promised to be his children. This promise we have kept.

“Englishman, it is you that have made war with this our father. You are his enemy; and how then could you have the boldness to venture among us, his children? You know that his enemies are ours.

“Englishman, we are informed that our father, the King of France, is old and infirm; and that the Grand Sauteur, an encounter with whom in 1767 is described by Jonathan Carver.—Editor.

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being fatigued with making war upon your nation, he is fallen asleep. During his sleep you have taken advantage of him and possessed yourselves of Canada. But his nap is almost at an end. I think I hear him already stirring and inquiring for his children, the Indians; and when he does awake, what must become of you? He will destroy you utterly!

“Englishman, although you have conquered the French, you have not yet conquered us! We are not your slaves. These lakes, these woods and mountains were left to us by our ancestors. They are our inheritance; and we will part with them to none. Your nation supposes that we, like the white people, cannot live without bread—and pork—and beef! But you ought to know that He, the Great Spirit and Master of Life, has provided food for us in these spacious lakes and on these woody mountains.

“Englishman, our father, the King of France, employed our young men to make war upon your nation. In this warfare many of them have been killed, and it is our custom to retaliate until such time as the spirits of the slain are satisfied. But the spirits of the slain are to be satisfied in either of two ways; the first is by the spilling of the blood of the nation by which they fell; the other by *covering the bodies of the dead*, and thus allaying the resentment of their relations. This is done by making presents.

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“Englishman, your king has never sent us any presents, nor entered into any treaty with us, wherefore he and we are still at war; and until he does these things we must consider that we have no other father, nor friend among the white men than the King of France; but for you we have taken into consideration that you have ventured your life among us in the expectation that we should not molest you. You do not come armed with an intention to make war; you come in peace to trade with us and supply us with necessaries of which we are in much want. We shall regard you, therefore, as a brother; and you may sleep tranquilly, without fear of the Chipewa. As a token of our friendship we present you with this pipe to smoke.”

As Minavavana uttered these words an Indian presented me with a pipe, which, after I had drawn the smoke three times, was carried to the chief, and after him to every person in the room. This ceremony ended, the chief arose and gave me his hand in which he was followed by all the rest.

Being again seated, Minavavana requested that his young men might be allowed to taste what he called my *English milk* (meaning rum)—observing that it was long since they had tasted any, and that they were very desirous to know whether or not there were any difference between the English milk and the French.

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My adventure on leaving Fort William Augustus had left an impression on my mind which made me tremble when Indians asked for rum; and I would therefore willingly have excused myself in this particular; but being informed that it was customary to comply with the request, and withal satisfied with the friendly declarations which I had received, I promised to give them a small cask at parting.

After this, by the aid of my interpreter I made a reply to the speech of Minavavana, declaring that it was the good character which I had heard of the Indians that had alone emboldened me to come among them; that their late father, the King of France, had surrendered Canada to the King of England, whom they ought now to regard as their father, and who would be as careful of them as the other had been; that I had come to furnish them with necessaries, and that their good treatment of me would be an encouragement to others. They appeared satisfied with what I said, repeating *eh!* (an expression of approbation) after hearing each particular. I had prepared a present which I now gave them with the utmost good will. At their departure I distributed a small quantity of rum.

Relieved as I now imagined myself from all occasion of anxiety as to the treatment which I was to experience from the Indians, I assorted my goods, and hired Canadian interpreters and clerks, in whose care I was to send

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them into Lake Michigan and the River St. Pierre, in the country of the Nadowessies;<sup>34</sup> into Lake Superior among the Chipewa, and to the Grand Portage for the Northwest. Everything was ready for their departure when new dangers sprung up and threatened to overwhelm me.

At the entrance of Lake Michigan and at about twenty miles to the west of Fort Michilimackinac is the village of L'Arbre Croche, inhabited by a band of Ottawa boasting of two hundred and fifty fighting men. L'Arbre Croche is the seat of the Jesuit mission of St. Ignace de Michilimackinac, and the people are partly baptized, and partly not.<sup>35</sup> The missionary resides on a farm attached to the mission and situated between the village and the fort, both of which are under his care. The Ottawa of L'Arbre Croche, who when compared with the Chipewa appear to be a much advanced in civilization, grow maize for the market of Michilimackinac, where this

<sup>34</sup> The "Nadowessies" are the Dakota or Sioux Indians. The "St. Pierre" is the modern Minnesota River, which empties into the Mississippi between St. Paul and Minneapolis.—Editor.

<sup>35</sup> L'Arbre Croche, on the north shore of Little Traverse Bay near modern Harbor Springs, was founded as a mission village in 1742, and has ever since remained a center for Catholic mission Indians. It is more nearly south than west of old Mackinaw, and the distance by water is about forty miles.—Editor.

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commodity is depended upon for provisioning the canoes.

The new dangers which presented themselves came from this village of Ottawa. Everything as I have said was in readiness for the departure of my goods when accounts arrived of its approach; and shortly after, two hundred warriors entered the fort and billeted themselves in the several houses among the Canadian inhabitants. The next morning they assembled in the house which was built for the commandant, or governor, and ordered the attendance of myself and of two other merchants still later from Montreal, namely Messrs. Stanley Goddard and Ezekiel Solomons.<sup>36</sup>

After our entering the council room and taking our seats one of the chiefs commenced an address:

"Englishmen," he said, "we, the Ottawas were some time since informed of your arrival

<sup>36</sup> These men were, with Henry, among the earliest British traders to reach the upper country. James Stanley Goddard accompanied Lieutenant Gorrell to Green Bay, being driven from here by the uprising of 1763. Upon the restoration of British authority he returned to the Northwest, where he was for many years a prominent merchant. About the year 1777 he became government storekeeper at Montreal, and this position he continued to hold as late as 1795. Ezekiel Solomon, like Goddard, was driven out of the upper country in 1763 but later he returned, and in 1778 we find him preparing a trading outfit to winter on the north shore of Lake Superior.—Editor.

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in this country, and of your having brought with you the goods of which we have need. At this news we were greatly pleased, believing that through your assistance our wives and children would be enabled to pass another winter; but what was our surprise, when a few days ago we were again informed that the goods which as we had expected were intended for us were on the eve of departure for distant countries, of which some are inhabited by our enemies! These accounts being spread, our wives and children came to us crying and desiring that we should go to the fort to learn with our own ears their truth or falsehood. We accordingly embarked almost naked as you see; and on our arrival here we have inquired into the accounts and found them true. We see your canoes ready to depart and find your men engaged for the Mississippi and other distant regions.

“Under these circumstances we have considered the affair; and you are now sent for that you may hear our determination, which is that you shall give to each of our men, young and old, merchandise and ammunition to the amount of fifty beaver skins on credit, and for which I have no doubt of their paying you in the summer, on their return from their wintering.”

A compliance with this demand would have stripped me and my fellow merchants of all our merchandise; and what rendered the affair still



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more serious, we even learned that these Ottawa were accustomed never to pay for what they received on credit. In reply, therefore, to the speech which we had heard, we requested that the demand contained in it might be diminished; but we were answered that the Ottawa had nothing further to say except that they would allow till the next day for reflection; after which, if compliance was not given, they would make no further application, but take into their own hands the property which they already regarded as their own—as having been brought into their country before the conclusion of any peace between themselves and the English.

We now returned to consider of our situation; and in the evening Farley, the interpreter, paid us a visit, and assured us that it was the intention of the Ottawa to put us that night to death. He advised us, as our only means of safety, to comply with the demands which had been made; but we suspected our informant of a disposition to prey upon our fears with a view to induce us to abandon the Indian trade, and resolved however this might be, rather to stand on the defensive than submit. We trusted to the house in which I lived as a fort, and armed ourselves and about thirty of our men with muskets. Whether or not the Ottawa ever intended violence we never had an opportunity of knowing; but the night passed quietly.



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Early the next morning a second council was held, and the merchants were again summoned to attend. Believing that every hope of resistance would be lost, should we commit our persons into the hands of our enemies, we sent only a refusal. There was none without in whom we had any confidence, except Campion. From him we learned from time to time whatever was rumored among the Canadian inhabitants as to the designs of the Ottawa; and from him toward sunset we received the gratifying intelligence that a detachment of British soldiery, sent to garrison Michilimackinac, was distant only five miles and would enter the fort early the next morning.

Near at hand, however, as relief was reported to be, our anxiety could not but be great; for a long night was to be passed, and our fate might be decided before the morning. To increase our apprehensions, about midnight we were informed that the Ottawa were holding a council, at which no white man was permitted to be present, Farley alone excepted; and him we suspected, and afterward positively knew, to be our greatest enemy. We, on our part, remained all night upon the alert; but at daybreak to our surprise and joy we saw the Ottawa preparing to depart. By sunrise not a man of them was left in the fort; and indeed the scene was altogether changed. The inhabitants, who, while the Ottawa were present, had avoided all connection with the English

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traders, now came with congratulations. They related that the Ottawa had proposed to them that if joined by the Canadians they would march and attack the troops which were known to be advancing on the fort; and they added that it was their refusal which had determined the Ottawa to depart.

At noon three hundred troops of the Sixtieth Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Lesslie, marched into the fort; and this arrival dissipated all our fears from whatever source derived.<sup>37</sup> After a few days detachments were sent into the Bay des Puants<sup>38</sup> by which is the route to the Mississippi and at the mouth of

<sup>37</sup> The last French commander of Mackinac—Beaujeau de Villemonde, brother of him who fell gloriously while leading his men against Braddock's doomed army in 1755 — abandoned the post in the autumn of 1760, and retired by way of Wisconsin to the Illinois country. Not until September 28, 1761, did a British detachment arrive to take possession of Mackinac. The leader of the English force was Captain Henry Balfour of the Eightieth Regiment, better known, perhaps, as Gage's Light Infantry. With Balfour, however, was Lieutenant William Leslie of the Sixtieth Regiment—the Royal Americans—who was left at Mackinac with a garrison of twenty-eight men, while Balfour with the remainder of his force went on to take possession of the remaining French posts in the Upper Country. The following year Leslie asked to be "relieved from this disagreeable station," but instead the post was reinforced by Captain George Etherington, Leslie remaining as second in command.—Editor.

<sup>38</sup> Modern Green Bay: the post was on the site of the modern city of that name.—Editor.

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the St. Joseph <sup>39</sup> which leads to the Illinois. The Indians from all quarters came to pay their respects to the commandant; and the merchants dispatched their canoes, though it was now the middle of September, and therefore somewhat late in the season.

<sup>39</sup> Fort St. Joseph stood in the outskirts of modern Niles, Michigan, some thirty miles inland from the mouth of the river. The old fort site is now covered by water, due to the building in recent years of a dam across the river at Niles for purposes of power development.—Editor.

## Chapter 5

### THE WINTER AT MACKINAC

THE village of L'Arbre Croche supplies, as I have said, the maize, or Indian corn, with which the canoes are victualled. This species of grain is prepared for use by boiling it in a strong lye, after which the husk may be easily removed; and it is next mashed and dried. In this state it is soft and friable like rice. The allowance for each man on the voyage is a quart a day; and a bushel with two pounds of prepared fat is reckoned to be a month's subsistence. No other allowance is made of any kind, not even of salt; and bread is never thought of. The men, nevertheless, are healthy and capable of performing their heavy labor. This mode of victualling is essential to the trade, which being pursued at great distances, and in vessels so small as canoes, will not admit of the use of other food. If the men were to be supplied with bread and pork the canoes could not carry a sufficiency for six months; and the ordinary duration of the voyage is not less than fourteen. The difficulty which would belong to an attempt to reconcile any other men than Canadians to this fare seems to secure to them and their employers the monopoly of the fur trade.

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The sociable disposition of the commandant enabled us to pass the winter at Michilimackinac in a manner as agreeable as circumstances would permit. The amusements consisted chiefly in shooting, hunting, and fishing. The neighboring woods abounded in partridges<sup>40</sup> and hares, the latter of which is white in winter; and the lake is filled with fish, of which the most celebrated are trout, whitefish, and sturgeon.

Trout are taken by making holes in the ice in which are set lines and baits. These are often left for many days together, and in some places at the depth of fifty fathoms; for the trout having swallowed the bait, remains fast and alive till taken up. This fish, which is found of the weight of from ten to sixty pounds and upward, constitutes the principal food of the inhabitants. When this fails they have recourse to maize, but this is very expensive. I bought more than a hundred bushels at forty livres per bushel. Money is rarely received or paid at Michilimackinac, the circulating medium consisting in furs and peltries. In this exchange a pound of beaver skin is reckoned at sixty sols, an otter skin at six livres, and marten skins at thirty sols each.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> In North America there is no *partridge*; but the name is given to more than one species of grouse. The birds here intended are red grouse.—Author.

<sup>41</sup> After the English conquest of Canada the value of the livre was fixed at one shilling Canadian currency.

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This is only one-half of the real value of the furs; and it is therefore always agreed to pay either in furs at their actual price at the fort, or in cash to double the amount, as reckoned in furs.

At the same time that I paid the price which I have mentioned for maize I paid at the rate of a dollar per pound for the tallow, or prepared fat to mix with it. The meat itself was at the same price. The Jesuit missionary killed an ox which he sold by the quarter, taking the weight of the meat in beaver skin. Beaver skin as just intimated, was worth a dollar per pound.

These high prices of grain and beef led me to be very industrious in fishing. I usually set twenty lines and visited them daily, and often found at every visit fish enough to feed a hundred men. Whitefish, which exceed the trout as a delicious and nutritive food, are here in astonishing numbers. In shape they somewhat resemble the shad, but their flavor is perhaps above all comparison whatever. Those who live on them for months together preserve their relish to the end. This cannot be said of the trout.

The whitefish is taken in nets which are set under the ice. To do this several holes are made in the ice, each at such distance from that behind it as that it may be reached under

Twenty-five sols were equal to one shilling one penny sterling.—Editor.

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the ice by the end of a pole. A line of sixty fathoms in length is thus conveyed from hole to hole till it is extended to the length desired. This done, the pole is taken out, and with it one end of the line, to which the end is then fastened. The line being now drawn back by an assistant who holds the opposite extremity, the net is brought under and a large stone is made fast to the sinking line at each end and let down to the bottom; and the net is spread in the water by lighters on its upper edge, sinkers on its lower, in the usual manner. The fish, running against the net, entangle their gills in the meshes and are thus detained till taken up. Whitefish is used as a bait for trout. They are much smaller than the trout, but usually weigh, at Michilimackinac, from three to seven pounds.

During the whole winter very few Indians visited the fort; but two families, one of which was that of a chief, had their lodges on a river five leagues below us, and occasionally brought beaver flesh for sale.

The chief was warmly attached to the English. He had been taken prisoner by Sir William Johnson at the siege of Fort Niagara, and had received from that intelligent officer his liberty, the medal usually presented to a chief, and the British flag. Won by these unexpected acts of kindness, he had returned to Michilimackinac full of praises of the English, and hoisting his flag over his lodge. This

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latter demonstration of his partiality had nearly cost him his life; his lodge was broken down and his flag torn to pieces. The pieces he carefully gathered up and preserved with pious care; and whenever he came to the fort he drew them forth and exhibited them. On these occasions it grew into a custom to give him as much liquor as he said was necessary to make him cry over the misfortune of losing his flag. The commandant would have given him another, but he thought that he could not accept it without danger.

The greatest depth of snow throughout the season was three feet. On the second day of April the ice on the lake broke up and the navigation was resumed; and we immediately began to receive from the Indians around us large supplies of wild fowl.



## Chapter 6

### A VISIT TO SAULT STE. MARIE

**B**EING desirous of visiting the Sault de Ste. Marie I left Michilimackinac on the fifteenth of May in a canoe. The Sault de Ste. Marie is distant from Michilimackinac thirty leagues and lies in the strait which separates Lake Huron from Lake Superior.

Having passed Le Détour, a point of land at the entrance of the strait, our course lay among numerous islands, some of which are twenty miles in length. We ascended the rapid of Miscoutinsaki, a spot well adapted for mill seats, and above which is the mouth of the river of the same name. The lands on the south shore of this river are excellent. The lake is bordered by meadows, and at a short distance back are groves of sugar maple. From this river to the Sault de Ste. Marie is one continued meadow.

On the nineteenth I reached the Sault. Here was a stockaded fort in which under the French government there was kept a small garrison, commanded by an officer who was called the governor, but was in fact a clerk who managed the Indian trade here on government account. The houses were four in number, of which the first was the governor's, the second the

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interpreter's, and the other two, which were the smallest, had been used for barracks. The only family was that of M. Cadotte, the interpreter,<sup>42</sup> whose wife was a Chipewa.

The fort is seated on a beautiful plain of about two miles in circumference, and covered with luxuriant grass; and within sight are the rapids in the strait, distant half a mile. The width of the strait, or river, is about half a mile. The portage, or carrying-place, commences at the fort. The banks are rocky, and allow only a narrow footpath over them. Canoes, half loaded, ascend on the south side and the other half of the load is carried on men's shoulders.

These rapids are beset with rocks of the most dangerous description; and yet they are the scene of a fishery in which all their dangers are braved and mastered with singular expertness. They are full of whitefish much larger and more excellent than those of Michilimackinac, and

<sup>42</sup> This was Jean Baptiste Cadotte, Sr., who came into the Northwest toward the middle of the eighteenth century. In accordance with the custom of his time he lived with a Chippewa woman, and in 1756 the couple were legally married by the Jesuit father at Mackinac. Cadotte made Sault Ste. Marie his headquarters, and from here pursued the Indian trade in the Lake Superior region until in 1796, induced by the advance of old age, he made over his property to his two sons, Jean Baptiste and Michel. Both of these men married Chipewa women, and both became prominent in the trading annals of the Northwest. The elder Cadotte died in 1803.—Editor.

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which are found here during the greater part of the season, weighing in general from six pounds to fifteen.

The method of taking them is this: each canoe carries two men, one of whom steers with a paddle, and the other is provided with a pole ten feet in length, and at the end of which is affixed a scoop-net. The steersman sets the canoe from the eddy of one rock to that of another; while the fisherman in the prow, who sees through the pellucid element the prey of which he is in pursuit, dips his net and sometimes brings up at every succeeding dip as many as it can contain. The fish are often crowded together in the water in great numbers, and a skilful fisherman in autumn will take five hundred in two hours.

This fishery is of great moment to the surrounding Indians, whom it supplies with a large proportion of their winter's provision; for having taken the fish in the manner described, they cure them by drying in the smoke, and lay them up in large quantities.

There is at present a village of Chipewa of fifty warriors seated at this place; but the inhabitants reside here during the summer only, going westward in the winter to hunt. The village was anciently much more populous.

At the south are also seen a few of the wandering O'pimittish Ininiwac, literally Men of the Woods, otherwise called Wood Indians and *Gens de Terres* — a peaceable and inoffensive

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race, but less conversant with some of the arts of first necessity than any of their neighbors. They have no villages, and their lodges are so rudely fashioned as to afford them but very inadequate protection against inclement skies. The greater part of their year is spent in traveling from place to place in search of food. The animal on which they chiefly depend is the hare. This they take in springes. Of the skin they make coverings with much ingenuity, cutting it into narrow strips, and weaving these into a cloth of the shape of a blanket, and of a quality very warm and agreeable.

The pleasant situation of the fort, and still more the desire of learning the Chipewa language, led me to resolve on wintering in it. In the family of M. Cadotte no other language than the Chipewa was spoken.

During the summer the weather was sometimes exceedingly hot. Mosquitoes and black flies were so numerous as to be a heavy counterpoise to the pleasure of hunting. Pigeons were in great plenty; the stream supplied our drink; and sickness was unknown.

In the course of the season a small detachment of troops under the command of Lieutenant Jemette <sup>43</sup> arrived to garrison the fort.

<sup>43</sup> This was Ensign John Jamet of the Sixtieth Regiment, who came to Mackinac with Captain Etherington in the autumn of 1760. He was the first victim of the massacre when Mackinac was taken by the Chipewa in June, 1763.—Editor.

## Chapter 7

### DESTRUCTION OF THE FORT AND RETURN TO MACKINAC

**I**N the beginning of October the fish as is usual was in great abundance at the Sault; and by the fifteenth day of the month I had myself taken upward of five hundred. These I caused to be dried in the customary manner by suspending them in pairs, head downward, on long poles laid horizontally for that purpose and supported by two stakes driven into the ground at either end. The fish are frozen the first night after they are taken; and by the aid of the severe cold of the winter they are thus preserved in a state perfectly fit for use even till the month of April.

Others were not less successful than myself; and several canoe-loads of fish were exported to Michilimackinac, our commanding officer being unable to believe that his troops would have need to live on fish during the winter; when, as he flattered himself, a regular supply of venison and other food would reach the garrison through the means of the Indians, whose services he proposed to purchase out of the large funds of liquor which were subject to his orders.

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But all these calculations were defeated by the arrival of a very serious misfortune. At one o'clock in the morning of the twenty-second day of December <sup>44</sup> I was awakened by an alarm of fire, which was actually raging in the houses of the commandant and others. On arriving at the commandant's I found that this officer was still within side; and being acquainted with the window of the room in which he slept I procured it to be broken in in time for his escape. I was also so fortunate as to save a small quantity of gunpowder only a few moments before the fire reached all the remainder. A part of the stockade, all the houses, M. Cadotte's alone excepted, all the provisions of the troops, and a considerable part of our fish were burnt.

On consultation the next day it was agreed that the only means which remained at this late period of the season to preserve the garrison from famine was that of sending it back to Michilimackinac. This was itself an undertaking of some peril; for, had the ice prevented their reaching the place of destination, starving would have become as inevitable elsewhere as it threatened to be at the Sault de Ste. Marie. The soldiers embarked and happily reached Michilimackinac on the thirty-first day of the month. On the very next morning the navigation was wholly closed.

<sup>44</sup> The fort was destroyed December 10, 1762.—Editor.

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The commandant and all the rest now lived in one small house, subsisting only by hunting and fishing. The woods afforded us some hares and partridges, and we took large trout with the spear. In order to spear trout under the ice, holes being first cut of two yards in circumference, cabins of about two feet in height are built over them of small branches of trees; and these are further covered with skins so as wholly to exclude the light. The design and result of this contrivance is to render it practicable to discern objects in the water at a very considerable depth; for the reflection of light from the water gives that element an opaque appearance and hides all objects from the eye at a small distance beneath its surface. A spear head of iron is fastened on a pole of about ten feet in length. This instrument is lowered into the water; and the fisherman, lying upon his belly, with his head under the cabin or cover, and therefore over the hole, lets down the figure of a fish in wood and filled with lead. Round the middle of the fish is tied a small packthread; and when at the depth of ten fathoms where it is intended to be employed, it is made, by drawing the string and by the simultaneous pressure of the water, to move forward after the manner of a real fish. Trout and other large fish, deceived by its resemblance, spring toward it to seize it; but by a dexterous jerk of the string it is instantly taken out of their reach. The decoy is now drawn

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nearer to the surface, and the fish takes some time to renew the attack, during which the spear is raised and held conveniently for striking. On the return of the fish the spear is plunged into its back; and, the spear being barbed, it is easily drawn out of the water. So completely do the rays of the light pervade the element that in three fathoms of water I have often seen the shadows of the fish on the bottom, following them as they moved; and this when the ice itself was two feet in thickness.

By these pursuits and others of a similar kind we supported ourselves for two months, that is until the twentieth of February, when we imagined the lake to be frozen and Michilimackinac therefore accessible; and the commandant wishing to go to that fort, M. Cadotte, myself, two Canadians, and two Indians, agreed to accompany him. The Canadians and Indians were loaded with some parched maize, some fish, a few pieces of scorched pork, which had been saved from the fire, and a few loaves of bread made of flour which was also partly burnt.

We walked on snowshoes, a mode of travelling sufficiently fatiguing to myself, but of which the commandant had had no previous experience whatever. In consequence our progress was slow, wearisome, and disastrous. On the seventh day of our march we had only reached Point du Détour which lies half way between the Sault and Michilimackinac; and



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here to our mortification and dismay we found the lake still open and the ice drifting. Our provisions, too, on examination, were found to be nearly expended; and nothing remained for us to do but to send back the Canadians and Indians, whose motions would be swift, for an additional supply.

In their absence the commandant, M. Cadotte, and myself, three persons in number, were left with about two pounds of pork and three of bread for our subsistence during the three days and perhaps four, which they would require for a journey of ninety miles. Being appointed to act the part of commissary, I divided the provisions into four parts, one for each day; and to our great happiness at ten o'clock on the fourth day our faithful servants returned. Early in the morning of the fifth we left our encampment and proceeded. The weather this day was exceedingly cold.

We had only advanced two leagues when the commandant found it almost wholly impossible to go further, his feet being blistered by the cords of the snowshoes. On this account we made short marches for three days; and this loss of time threatened us anew with famine. We were now too far from the Sault to send back for a supply; and it was therefore determined that myself, accompanied by one of the Canadians, should go as speedily as possible to Michilimackinac, and there inform the commanding officer of the situation of

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those behind. Accordingly the next morning at break of day I left my fellow sufferers, and at three o'clock in the afternoon had the pleasure of entering the fort, whence a party was sent the next morning with provisions. This party returned on the third day, bringing with it Lieutenant Jemette and the rest, in safety. Major Etherington, of the Sixtieth Regiment, who had arrived in the preceding autumn, now commanded at the fort.

I remained at Michilimackinac until the tenth of March, on which day I set out on my return to the Sault, taking the route of the Bay of Boutchitaouy<sup>45</sup> which the ice had now rendered practicable. From the bottom of the bay the course lies in a direct line through the woods, a journey I performed in two days, though I was now troubled with a disorder, called the snowshoe evil, proceeding from an unusual strain on the tendons of the leg, occasioned by the weight of the snowshoe and which brings on inflammation. The remedy prescribed in the country is that of laying a piece of lighted touchwood on the part and leaving it there till the flesh is burnt to the nerve; but this experiment, though I had frequently seen it attended with success in others, I did not think proper to make upon myself.

<sup>45</sup> Modern St. Martin Bay, which indents the Upper Peninsula of Michigan due north of Mackinac Island.  
—Editor.

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The lands between the Bay of Boutchitaouy and the Sault are generally swampy, excepting so much of them as compose a ridge, or mountain, running east and west, and which is rocky and covered with the rock or sugar maple, or sugar wood.<sup>46</sup> The season for making maple sugar was now at hand; and shortly after my arrival at the Sault I removed with the other inhabitants to the place at which we were to perform the manufacture.

A certain part of the maple woods having been chosen, and which was distant about three miles from the fort, a house twenty feet long and fourteen broad was begun in the morning, and before night made fit for the comfortable reception of eight persons and their baggage. It was open at top, had a door at each end, and a fireplace in the middle running the whole length.

The next day was employed in gathering the bark of white birch trees with which to make vessels to catch the wine or sap. The trees were now cut or tapped, and spouts or ducts introduced into the wound. The bark vessels were placed under the ducts; and as they filled, the liquor was taken out in buckets and conveyed into reservoirs or vats of moose skin, each vat containing a hundred gallons. From these we supplied the boilers, of which we had twelve of from twelve to twenty gallons each, with fires constantly under them

<sup>46</sup> *Acer saccharinum*.—Author.

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day and night. While the women collected the sap, boiled it, and completed the sugar, the men were not less busy in cutting wood, making fires, and in hunting and fishing in part of our supply of food.

The earlier part of the spring is that best adapted to making maple sugar. The sap runs only in the day; and it will not run unless there has been a frost the night before. When in the morning there is a clear sun and the night has left ice of the thickness of a dollar the greatest quantity is produced.

On the twenty-fifth of April our labor ended, and we returned to the fort, carrying with us as we found by the scales, sixteen hundred-weight of sugar. We had besides thirty-six gallons of syrup; and during our stay in the woods we certainly consumed three hundred-weight. Though, as I have said, we hunted and fished, yet sugar was our principal food during the whole month of April. I have known Indians to live wholly upon the same and become fat.

On the day of our return to the fort there arrived an English gentleman, Sir Robert Dovers,<sup>47</sup> on a voyage of curiosity. I accompanied this gentleman on his return to Michilimackinac, which we reached on the twentieth of May. My intention was to remain

<sup>47</sup> Sir Robert Davers of Suffolk, England, came to America, apparently in the spring of 1761 on a tour of observation. He was at Detroit in the spring of 1762,

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there till after my clerks should have come in from the interior, and then to go back to the Sault de Ste. Marie.

In the beginning of May the geese and ducks made their appearance, in their progress northward.

whence he left for a tour of the Upper Lakes. He was again at Detroit during the winter of 1762-63, and in May of the latter year was slain, the first victim of Pontiac's uprising. His body was eaten by the Indians. It is apparent that Henry is in error as to the date here given.—Editor.

## Chapter 8

### THE GATHERING STORM

WHEN I reached Michilimackinac I found several other traders who had arrived before me from different parts of the country, and who in general declared the dispositions of the Indians to be hostile to the English, and even apprehended some attack. M. Laurent Ducharme<sup>48</sup> distinctly informed Major Etherington that a plan was absolutely conceived for destroying him, his garrison and all the English in the upper country; but the commandant, believing this and other reports to be without foundation, proceeding only from idle or ill-disposed persons, and of a tendency to do mischief, expressed much displeasure against M. Ducharme, and threatened to send the next person who should bring a story of the same kind a prisoner to Detroit.

The garrison at this time consisted of ninety privates, two subalterns and the commandant; and the English merchants at the fort were

<sup>48</sup> Laurent Ducharme was a resident of Mackinac at least as early as 1758. At the time of the American Revolution he seems to have been stationed at Milwaukee. A cousin, Jean Marie Ducharme, was a prominent fur trader in the Northwest in this period.—Editor.

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four in number.<sup>49</sup> Thus strong, few entertained anxiety concerning the Indians, who had no weapons but small arms.

Meanwhile the Indians from every quarter were daily assembling in unusual numbers, but with every appearance of friendship, frequenting the fort, and disposing of their peltries in such a manner as to dissipate almost every one's fears. For myself, on one occasion I took the liberty of observing to Major Etherington that in my judgment no confidence ought to be placed in them, and that I was informed no less than four hundred lay around the fort.

In return the Major only rallied me on my timidity; and it is to be confessed that if this officer neglected admonition on his part, so did I on mine. Shortly after my first arrival at Michilimackinac in the preceding year a Chipewa named Wawatam began to come often to my house, betraying in his demeanor strong marks of personal regard. After this had continued for some time he came on a certain day, bringing with him his whole

<sup>49</sup> Here, as often, Henry's figures are erroneous. Instead of ninety, the garrison numbered thirty-five. Francis Parkman suggests that Henry meant to include "all the inhabitants of the fort, both soldiers and Canadians" in his enumeration; but his language plainly does not admit this interpretation. The four merchants were Solomon, Bostwick, Henry, and one Tracy. Of the latter, who was killed in the massacre, I have learned no more than Henry himself sets forth.—Editor.

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family, and at the same time a large present, consisting of skins, sugar, and dried meat. Having laid these in a heap he commenced a speech in which he informed me that some years before he had observed a fast, devoting himself according to the custom of his nation to solitude and to the mortification of his body in the hope to obtain from the Great Spirit protection through all his days; that on this occasion he had dreamed of adopting an Englishman as his son, brother, and friend; that from the moment in which he first beheld me, he had recognized me as the person whom the Great Spirit had been pleased to point out to him for a brother; that he hoped that I would not refuse his present, and that he should forever regard me as one of his family.

I could do no otherwise than accept the present and declare my willingness to have so good a man as this appeared to be for my friend and brother. I offered a present in return for that which I had received, which Wawatam accepted, and then thanking me for the favor which he said that I had rendered him, he left me and soon after set out on his winter's hunt.

Twelve months had now elapsed since the occurrence of this incident, and I had almost forgotten the person of my brother, when on the second day of June, Wawatam came again to my house in a temper of mind visibly melancholy and thoughtful. He told me that



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he had just returned from his wintering ground, and I asked after his health; but without answering my question he went on to say that he was very sorry to find me returned from the Sault; that he had intended to go to that place himself immediately after his arrival at Michilimackinac; and that he wished me to go there, along with him and his family, the next morning. To all this he joined an inquiry whether or not the commandant had heard bad news, adding that during the winter he had himself been frequently disturbed with the noise of evil birds; and further suggesting that there were numerous Indians near the fort, many of whom had never shown themselves within it. Wawatam was about forty-five years of age, of an excellent character among his nation, and a chief.

Referring much of what I heard to the peculiarities of the Indian character, I did not pay all the attention which they will be found to have deserved to the entreaties and remarks of my visitor. I answered that I could not think of going to the Sault so soon as the next morning, but would follow him there after the arrival of my clerks. Finding himself unable to prevail with me he withdrew for that day; but early the next morning he came again, bringing with him his wife and a present of dried meat. At this interview, after stating that he had several packs of beaver for which he intended to deal with me, he expressed

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a second time his apprehensions from the numerous Indians who were round the fort, and earnestly pressed me to consent to an immediate departure for the Sault. As a reason for this particular request he assured me that all the Indians proposed to come in a body that day to the fort to demand liquor of the commandant, and that he wished me to be gone before they should grow intoxicated.

I had made, at the period to which I am now referring, so much progress in the language in which Wawatam addressed me as to be able to hold an ordinary conversation in it; but the Indian manner of speech is so extravagantly figurative that it is only for a very perfect master to follow and comprehend it entirely. Had I been further advanced in this respect I think that I should have gathered so much information from this my friendly monitor as would have put me into possession of the design of the enemy, and enabled me to save as well others as myself; as it was, it unfortunately happened that I turned a deaf ear to everything, leaving Wawatam and his wife, after long and patient, but ineffectual efforts, to depart alone with dejected countenances, and not before they had each let fall some tears.

In the course of the same day I observed that the Indians came in great numbers into the fort, purchasing tomahawks (small axes of one pound weight) and frequently desiring to see silver arm bands and other valuable orna-

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ments, of which I had a large quantity for sale. These ornaments, however, they in no instance purchased; but after turning them over, left them, saying that they would call again the next day. Their motive, as it afterward appeared, was no other than the very artful one of discovering, by requesting to see them, the particular places of their deposit so that they might lay their hands on them in the moment of pillage with the greater certainty and dispatch.

At night I turned in my mind the visits of Wawatam; but though they were calculated to excite uneasiness nothing induced me to believe that serious mischief was at hand. The next day being the fourth of June was the King's birthday.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Contemporary documents show that the massacre occurred on June 2 instead of June 4. See letters of Captain Etherington in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, VII, 162-63, and XVIII, 253-54.—Editor.

## Chapter 9

### A BALL GAME AND A MASSACRE

THE morning was sultry. A Chipewa came to tell me that his nation was going to play at baggatiway with the Sacs or Saäkies, another Indian nation, for a high wager. He invited me to witness the sport, adding that the commandant was to be there, and would bet on the side of the Chipewa. In consequence of this information I went to the commandant and expostulated with him a little, representing that the Indians might possibly have some sinister end in view; but the commandant only smiled at my suspicions.

Baggatiway, called by the Canadians *le jeu de la crosse*, is played with a bat and ball. The bat is about four feet in length, curved, and terminating in a sort of racket. Two posts are planted in the ground at a considerable distance from each other, as a mile or more. Each party has its post, and the game consists in throwing the ball up to the post of the adversary. The ball, at the beginning, is placed in the middle of the course and each party endeavors as well to throw the ball out of the direction of its own post as into that of the adversary's.

I did not go myself to see the match which was now to be played without the fort, because

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there being a canoe prepared to depart on the following day for Montreal I employed myself in writing letters to my friends; and even when a fellow trader, Mr. Tracy, happened to call upon me, saying that another canoe had just arrived from Detroit, and proposing that I should go with him to the beach to inquire the news, it so happened that I still remained to finish my letters, promising to follow Mr. Tracy in the course of a few minutes. Mr. Tracy had not gone more than twenty paces from my door when I heard an Indian war cry and a noise of general confusion.

Going instantly to my window I saw a crowd of Indians within the fort furiously cutting down and scalping every Englishman they found. In particular I witnessed the fate of Lieutenant Jemette.

I had in the room in which I was a fowling piece, loaded with swan-shot. This I immediately seized and held it for a few minutes, waiting to hear the drum beat to arms. In this dreadful interval I saw several of my countrymen fall, and more than one struggling between the knees of an Indian, who, holding him in this manner, scalped him while yet living.

At length, disappointed in the hope of seeing resistance made to the enemy, and sensible, of course, that no effort of my own unassisted arm could avail against four hundred Indians, I thought only of seeking shelter. Amid the

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slaughter which was raging I observed many of the Canadian inhabitants of the fort calmly looking on, neither opposing the Indians, nor suffering injury; and from this circumstance I conceived a hope of finding security in their houses.

Between the yard door of my own house and that of M. Langlade, my next neighbor,<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> This was Charles Langlade, one of the most remarkable men in the history of the Northwest. Born at Mackinac in 1729 of a French father and a native mother, he was bred to war from childhood, and is said to have participated in ninety-nine battles and skirmishes. In 1752 Langlade led a band of northwestern Indians in the descent upon the English at Pickawillany and there struck what was virtually the first blow in the Seven Years' War. Three years later he led his northern tribesmen to the overthrow of General Braddock's army, and there is strong reason for thinking that it was Langlade who planned this affair. At the siege of Quebec in 1759, his quick eye caught the English army in a position where an attack would have proved fatal to it, and he begged his French superiors for the men necessary to make it. But Langlade was a militiaman and a halfbreed, and the regular officers gave no heed to his appeal; the opportunity passed unutilized; Wolfe took the city, and New France became a memory. When Montreal surrendered to General Amherst in September, 1760, Beaujeau, at Mackinac, departed for the Illinois in advance of the coming of the English troops, leaving Langlade in charge, with such authority as he might be able to wield, and he it was who turned the place over to Captain Balfour a year later. He seems loyally to have accepted the consequences of French defeat, and for the remainder of his active career was a partisan of Great Britain. After the massacre of 1763, Captain Etherington authorized

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there was only a low fence, over which I easily climbed. At my entrance I found the whole family at the windows, gazing at the scene of blood before them. I addressed myself immediately to M. Langlade, begging that he would put me into some place of safety until the heat of the affair should be over; an act of charity by which he might perhaps preserve me from the general massacre; but while I uttered my petition M. Langlade, who had looked for a moment at me, turned again to the window, shrugging his shoulders and intimating that he could do nothing for me:—"Que voudriez-vous que j'en ferais?"

This was a moment for despair; but the next a Pani woman,<sup>52</sup> a slave of M. Langlade's, beckoned me to follow her. She brought me to a door which she opened, desiring me to enter, and telling me that it led to the garret,

Langlade to assume charge of affairs at Mackinac. Soon after the Pontiac War he moved to Green Bay, where he lived until his death in the year 1800. In the Revolution he was a staunch upholder of British interests, leading his red followers repeatedly against the Americans.—Editor.

<sup>52</sup> The Panies are an Indian nation of the south.—Author.

This is quite true, but the term *pani* as here used meant simply an Indian slave, without regard to his tribal origin. It is a curious fact that as in Europe the word *slave*, originally a national name, was degraded to its present significance of bondman, so among the red men of North America the name of an Indian tribe came to have a like significance.—Editor.

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where I must go and conceal myself. I joyfully obeyed her directions; and she, having followed me up to the garret door, locked it after me and with great presence of mind took away the key.

This shelter obtained, if shelter I could hope to find it, I was naturally anxious to know what might still be passing without. Through an aperture which afforded me a view of the area of the fort I beheld, in shapes the foulest and most terrible, the ferocious triumphs of barbarian conquerors. The dead were scalped and mangled; the dying were writhing and shrieking under the unsatiated knife and tomahawk; and from the bodies of some, ripped open, their butchers were drinking the blood, scooped up in the hollow of joined hands and quaffed amid shouts of rage and victory. I was shaken not only with horror, but with fear. The sufferings which I witnessed I seemed on the point of experiencing. No long time elapsed before every one being destroyed who could be found, there was a general cry of "All is finished!" At the same instant I heard some of the Indians enter the house in which I was.

The garret was separated from the room below only by a layer of single boards, at once the flooring of the one and the ceiling of the other. I could therefore hear everything that passed; and the Indians no sooner came in than they inquired whether or not any Englishman



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were in the house. M. Langlade replied that he could not say — he did not know of any — answers in which he did not exceed the truth, for the Pani woman had not only hidden me by stealth, but kept my secret and her own. M. Langlade was therefore, as I presume, as far from a wish to destroy me as he was careless about saving me, when he added to these answers that they might examine for themselves, and would soon be satisfied as to the object of their question. Saying this, he brought them to the garret door.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> It seems apparent that Henry was in no position to estimate properly the motives which actuated the conduct of Langlade. He possessed great influence over these tribesmen, whom he had often led to war against the English; although he had made his peace with the latter, his red followers had not done so, as Henry's own account sufficiently shows. Even today in civilized America a frenzied mob intent on shedding blood will frequently ignore the appeals for peace and mercy made to it by a sheriff or other constituted authority. In Indian warfare mercy to the conquered was a thing unthought of. Thus Samuel Hearne, pleading with his Indian friends to spare the life of an Eskimo girl, was answered with ridicule and contempt. John Kinzie possessed influence enough with the Indians to pass unscathed, with all his family, through the Fort Dearborn massacre, but he had no influence to save the women and children, his neighbors, who were slaughtered in his presence. Captain Etherington testifies that Langlade was "very instrumental" in saving his own life and those of the soldiers after the massacre. It seems reasonable to conclude that he recognized the futility of any resistance to the Indians, as Henry himself had done a few minutes before; and that under the cir-

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The state of my mind will be imagined. Arrived at the door some delay was occasioned by the absence of the key and a few moments were thus allowed me in which to look around for a hiding place. In one corner of the garret was a heap of those vessels of birch bark used in maple sugar making as I have recently described.

The door was unlocked, and opening, and the Indians ascending the stairs, before I had completely crept into a small opening, which presented itself at one end of the heap. An instant after four Indians entered the room, all armed with tomahawks, and all besmeared with blood upon every part of their bodies.

The die appeared to be cast. I could scarcely breathe; but I thought that the throbbing of my heart occasioned a noise loud enough to betray me. The Indians walked in every direction about the garret, and one of them approached me so closely that at a particular moment, had he put forth his hand, he must have touched me. Still I remained undiscovered, a circumstance to which the dark color of my clothes and the want of light in a room which had no window, and in the corner in which I was, must have contributed. In a word, after taking several turns in the room, during which they told M. Langlade how many they had killed and how many scalps they had cumstances the course he adopted was the wisest one open to him.—Editor.

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taken, they returned down stairs, and I with sensations not to be expressed, heard the door, which was the barrier between me and my fate, locked for the second time.

There was a feather bed on the floor, and on this, exhausted as I was by the agitation of my mind, I threw myself down and fell asleep. In this state I remained till the dusk of the evening, when I was awakened by a second opening of the door. The person that now entered was M. Langlade's wife, who was much surprised at finding me, but advised me not to be uneasy, observing that the Indians had killed most of the English, but that she hoped I might myself escape. A shower of rain having begun to fall, she had come to stop a hole in the roof. On her going away, I begged her to send me a little water to drink, which she did.

As night was now advancing I continued to lie on the bed, ruminating on my condition, but unable to discover a resource from which I could hope for life. A flight to Detroit had no probable chance of success. The distance from Michilimackinac was four hundred miles; I was without provisions; and the whole length of the road lay through Indian countries, countries of an enemy in arms, where the first man whom I should meet would kill me. To stay where I was threatened nearly the same issue. As before, fatigue of mind, and not tranquillity, suspended my cares and procured me further sleep.

## Chapter 10

### FIRST DAYS OF CAPTIVITY

THE game of baggatiway, as from the description above will have been perceived, is necessarily attended with much violence and noise. In the ardor of contest the ball, as has been suggested, if it cannot be thrown to the goal desired, is struck in any direction by which it can be diverted from that designed by the adversary. At such a moment, therefore, nothing could be less liable to excite premature alarm than that the ball should be tossed over the pickets of the fort, nor that having fallen there, it should be followed on the instant by all engaged in the game, as well the one party as the other, all eager, all struggling, all shouting, all in the unrestrained pursuit of a rude athletic exercise. Nothing could be less fitted to excite premature alarm—nothing, therefore, could be more happily devised, under the circumstances, than a stratagem like this; and this was in fact the stratagem which the Indians had employed, by which they had obtained possession of the fort, and by which they had been enabled to slaughter and subdue its garrison and such of its other inhabitants as they pleased. To be still more certain of success they had prevailed

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upon as many as they could by a pretext the least liable to suspicion to come voluntarily without the pickets, and particularly the commandant and garrison themselves.

The respite which sleep afforded me during the night was put an end to by the return of morning. I was again on the rack of apprehension. At sunrise I heard the family stirring, and presently after, Indian voices informing M. Langlade they had not found my hapless self among the dead, and that they supposed me to be somewhere concealed. M. Langlade appeared from what followed to be by this time acquainted with the place of my retreat, of which no doubt he had been informed by his wife. The poor woman, as soon as the Indians mentioned me, declared to her husband in the French tongue that he should no longer keep me in his house, but deliver me up to my pursuers, giving as a reason for this measure that should the Indians discover his instrumentality in my concealment, they might revenge it on her children, and that it was better that I should die than they. M. Langlade resisted at first this sentence of his wife's; but soon suffered her to prevail, informing the Indians that he had been told I was in his house, that I had come there without his knowledge, and that he would put me into their hands. This was no sooner expressed than he began to ascend the stairs, the Indians following upon his heels.

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I now resigned myself to the fate with which I was menaced; and regarding every attempt at concealment as vain, I arose from the bed and presented myself full in view to the Indians who were entering the room. They were all in a state of intoxication, and entirely naked, except about the middle. One of them, named Wenniway, whom I had previously known, and who was upward of six feet in height, had his entire face and body covered with charcoal and grease, only that a white spot of two inches in diameter encircled either eye. This man, walking up to me, seized me with one hand by the collar of the coat, while in the other he held a large carving knife, as if to plunge it into my breast; his eyes, meanwhile, were fixed steadfastly on mine. At length, after some seconds of the most anxious suspense, he dropped his arm, saying, "I won't kill you!" To this he added that he had been frequently engaged in wars against the English, and had brought away many scalps; that on a certain occasion he had lost a brother whose name was Musinigon, and that I should be called after him.

A reprieve upon any terms placed me among the living, and gave me back the sustaining voice of hope; but Wenniway ordered me downstairs, and there informing me that I was to be taken to his cabin, where, and indeed everywhere else, the Indians were all mad with liquor, death again was threatened, and not as possible only, but as certain. I mentioned my

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fears on this subject to M. Langlade, begging him to represent the danger to my master. M. Langlade in this instance did not withhold his compassion, and Wenneiway immediately consented that I should remain where I was until he found another opportunity to take me away.

Thus far secure I reascended my garret stairs in order to place myself the furthest possible out of the reach of insult from drunken Indians; but I had not remained there more than an hour, when I was called to the room below in which was an Indian who said that I must go with him out of the fort, Wenneiway having sent him to fetch me. This man, as well as Wenneiway himself, I had seen before. In the preceding year I had allowed him to take goods on credit, for which he was still in my debt; and some short time previous to the surprise of the fort he had said upon my upbraiding him with want of honesty that he would pay me before long. This speech now came fresh into my memory and led me to suspect that the fellow had formed a design against my life. I communicated the suspicion to M. Langlade; but he gave for answer that I was not now my own master, and must do as I was ordered.

The Indian on his part directed that before I left the house I should undress myself, declaring that my coat and shirt would become him better than they did me. His pleasure in



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this respect being complied with, no other alternative was left me than either to go out naked, or to put on the clothes of the Indian, which he freely gave me in exchange. His motive for thus stripping me of my own apparel was no other as I afterward learned than this, that it might not be stained with blood when he should kill me.

I was now told to proceed; and my driver followed me close until I had passed the gate of the fort, when I turned toward the spot where I knew the Indians to be encamped. This, however, did not suit the purpose of my enemy, who seized me by the arm and drew me violently in the opposite direction to the distance of fifty yards above the fort. Here, finding that I was approaching the bushes and sand hills, I determined to proceed no farther, but told the Indian that I believed he meant to murder me, and that if so he might as well strike where I was as at any greater distance. He replied with coolness that my suspicions were just, and that he meant to pay me in this manner for my goods. At the same time he produced a knife and held me in a position to receive the intended blow. Both this and that which followed were necessarily the affair of a moment. By some effort, too sudden and too little dependent on thought to be explained or remembered, I was enabled to arrest his arm and give him a sudden push by which I turned him from me and released myself from



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his grasp. This was no sooner done than I ran toward the fort with all the swiftness in my power, the Indian following me, and I expecting every moment to feel his knife. I succeeded in my flight; and on entering the fort I saw Wenniway standing in the midst of the area, and to him I hastened for protection. Wenniway desired the Indian to desist; but the latter pursued me round him, making several strokes at me with his knife, and foaming at the mouth with rage at the repeated failure of his purpose. At length Wenniway drew near to M. Langlade's house; and, the door being open, I ran into it. The Indian followed me; but on my entering the house he voluntarily abandoned the pursuit.

Preserved so often and so unexpectedly as it had now been my lot to be, I returned to my garret with a strong inclination to believe that through the will of an overruling power no Indian enemy could do me hurt; but new trials, as I believed, were at hand when at ten o'clock in the evening I was roused from sleep and once more desired to descend the stairs. Not less, however, to my satisfaction than surprise, I was summoned only to meet Major Etherington, Mr. Bostwick, and Lieutenant Lesslie, who were in the room below.

These gentlemen had been taken prisoners while looking at the game without the fort and immediately stripped of all their clothes. They were now sent into the fort under the charge

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of Canadians, because, the Indians having resolved on getting drunk, the chiefs were apprehensive that they would be murdered if they continued in the camp. Lieutenant Jemette and seventy soldiers had been killed; and but twenty Englishmen, including soldiers, were still alive.<sup>54</sup> These were all within the fort, together with nearly three hundred Canadians.<sup>55</sup>

These being our numbers, myself and others proposed to Major Etherington to make an effort for regaining possession of the fort and maintaining it against the Indians. The Jesuit missionary was consulted on the project; but he discouraged us by his representations, not only of the merciless treatment which we must expect from the Indians should they regain their superiority, but of the little dependence which was to be placed upon our Canadian auxiliaries. Thus the fort and prisoners remained in the hands of the Indians, though through the whole night the prisoners and whites were in actual possession, and they were without the gates.

That whole night, or the greater part of it, was passed in mutual condolence, and my fellow prisoners shared my garret. In the

<sup>54</sup> Captain Etherington, in a letter to his superior officer at Detroit, June 12, 1763, states that sixteen soldiers and the trader Tracy were killed in the massacre, and two soldiers wounded; and that of those taken prisoners on June 2, five had since been killed.—Editor.

<sup>55</sup> Belonging to the canoes, etc.—Author.

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morning, being again called down, I found my master, Wenniway, and was desired to follow him. He led me to a small house within the fort, where in a narrow room and almost dark I found Mr. Ezekiel Solomons, an Englishman from Detroit, and a soldier, all prisoners. With these I remained in painful suspense as to the scene that was next to present itself till ten o'clock in the forenoon, when an Indian arrived, and presently marched us to the lakeside where a canoe appeared ready for departure, and in which we found that we were to embark.

Our voyage, full of doubt as it was, would have commenced immediately, but that one of the Indians who was to be of the party was absent. His arrival was to be waited for; and this occasioned a very long delay during which we were exposed to a keen northeast wind. An old shirt was all that covered me; I suffered much from the cold; and in this extremity M. Langlade coming down to the beach, I asked him for a blanket, promising if I lived to pay him for it at any price he pleased; but the answer I received was this, that he could let me have no blanket unless there were some one to be security for the payment. For myself, he observed, I had no longer any property in that country. I had no more to say to M. Langlade; but presently seeing another Canadian, named John Cuchoise, I addressed to him a similar request and was not refused. Naked

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as I was, and rigorous as was the weather, but for the blanket I must have perished. At noon our party was all collected, the prisoners all embarked, and we steered for the Isles du Castor<sup>56</sup> in Lake Michigan.

<sup>56</sup> The Beaver Islands in northern Lake Michigan, almost due west of Mackinac. They are chiefly notable in history as the seat of the Mormon kingdom of St. James, founded about 1850 by James Jesse Strang. Big Beaver Island, some twelve or fifteen miles long, has at its northern end an excellent harbor, long known to the sailors by the name of Paradise Bay. Here Strang established his capital, named in his honor, St. James. Around the islands are today the best fishing grounds on Lake Michigan; and St. James, a village of several hundred people, is chiefly supported by this industry.—Editor.

## Chapter 11

### THE JOURNEY TO BEAVER ISLAND

THE soldier who was our companion in misfortune was made fast to a bar of the canoe by a rope tied round his neck, as is the manner of the Indians in transporting their prisoners. The rest were left unconfined; but a paddle was put into each of our hands and we were made to use it. The Indians in the canoe were seven in number, the prisoners four. I had left, as it will be recollected, Major Etherington, Lieutenant Lesslie, and Mr. Bostwick at M. Langlade's, and was now joined in misery with Mr. Ezekiel Solomons, the soldier, and the Englishman who had newly arrived from Detroit. This was on the sixth day of June. The fort was taken on the fourth; I surrendered myself to Wenniway on the fifth; and this was the third day of our distress.

We were bound, as I have said, for the Isles du Castor which lie in the mouth of Lake Michigan; and we should have crossed the lake, but that a thick fog came on, on account of which the Indians deemed it safer to keep the shore close under their lee. We therefore approached the lands of the Ottawa and their village of L'Arbre Croche already mentioned as lying about twenty miles to the westward of

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Michilimackinac on the opposite side of the tongue of land on which the fort is built.

Every half hour the Indians gave their war whoops, one for every prisoner in their canoe. This is a general custom, by the aid of which all other Indians within hearing are apprised of the number of prisoners they are carrying.

In this manner we reached Wagoshense,<sup>57</sup> a long point stretching westward into the lake and which the Ottawa make a carrying-place to avoid going round it. It is distant eighteen miles from Michilimackinac. After the Indians had made their war whoop as before an Ottawa appeared upon the beach, who made signs that we should land.

In consequence we approached. The Ottawa asked the news and kept the Chipewa in further conversation till we were within a few yards of the land and in shallow water. At this moment a hundred men rushed upon us from among the bushes and dragged all the prisoners out of the canoes amid a terrifying shout.

We now believed that our last sufferings were approaching; but no sooner were we fairly on shore and on our legs than the chiefs of the party advanced and gave each of us their hands, telling us that they were our friends, and Ottawa, whom the Chipewa had insulted by destroying the English without consulting with them on the affair. They added that what they had done was for the

<sup>57</sup> i. e., Fox Point.—Author.

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purpose of saving our lives, the Chipewa having been carrying us to the Isles du Castro only to kill and devour us.

The reader's imagination is here distracted by the variety of our fortunes, and he may well paint to himself the state of mind of those who sustained them; who were the sport, or the victims, of a series of events more like dreams than realities, more like fiction than truth! It was not long before we were embarked again in the canoes of the Ottawa, who, the same evening, re-landed us at Michilimackinac, where they marched us into the fort in view of the Chipewa, confounded at beholding the Ottawa espouse a side opposite their own.

The Ottawa, who had accompanied us in sufficient numbers, took possession of the fort. We, who had changed masters but were still prisoners, were lodged in the house of the commandant and strictly guarded.

Early the next morning a general council was held, in which the Chipewa complained much of the conduct of the Ottawa in robbing them of their prisoners, alleging that all the Indians, the Ottawa alone excepted, were at war with the English; that Pontiac had taken Detroit; that the King of France had awoke, and repossessed himself of Quebec and Montreal; and that the English were meeting destruction, not only at Michilimackinac, but in every other part of the world. From all this they inferred that it became the Ottawa to

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restore the prisoners and to join in the war; and the speech was followed by large presents, being part of the plunder of the fort, and which was previously heaped in the center of the room. The Indians rarely make their answers till the day after they have heard the arguments offered. They did not depart from their custom on this occasion, and the council therefore adjourned.

We, the prisoners, whose fate was thus in controversy, were 'unacquainted at the time with this transaction, and therefore enjoyed a night of tolerable tranquillity, not in the least suspecting the reverse which was preparing for us. Which of the arguments of the Chipewa, or whether or not all were deemed valid by the Ottawa, I cannot say; but the council was resumed at an early hour in the morning and after several speeches had been made in it the prisoners were sent for and returned to the Chipewa.

The Ottawa, who now gave us into the hands of the Chipewa, had themselves declared that the latter designed no other than to kill us and *make broth of us*. The Chipewa, as soon as we were restored to them, marched us to a village of their own, situate on the point which is below the fort, and put us into a lodge already the prison of fourteen soldiers, tied two and two, with each a rope about his neck, and made fast to a pole which might be called the supporter of the building.



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I was left untied; but I passed a night sleepless and full of wretchedness. My bed was the bare ground, and I was again reduced to an old shirt as my entire apparel; the blanket which I had received through the generosity of M. Cuchoise having been taken from me among the Ottawa when they seized upon myself and the others at Wagoshense. I was, besides, in want of food, having for two days ate nothing.

I confess that in the canoe with the Chipe-wa I was offered bread—but bread with what accompaniment! They had a loaf which they cut with the same knives that they had employed in the massacre—knives still covered with blood. The blood they moistened with spittle, and rubbing it on the bread offered this for food to their prisoners, telling them to eat the blood of their countrymen.

Such was my situation on the morning of the seventh of June, in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three; but a few hours produced an event which gave still a new color to my lot.

Toward noon, when the great war chief, in company with Wenniway, was seated at the opposite end of the lodge, my friend and brother, Wawatam, suddenly came in. During the four days preceding I had often wondered what had become of him. In passing by he gave me his hand, but went immediately toward the great chief by the side of whom

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and Wenniway he sat himself down. The most uninterrupted silence prevailed; each smoked his pipe; and this done, Wawatam arose and left the lodge, saying to me as he passed, "Take courage!"

## Chapter 12

### RESCUED BY WAWATAM

AN hour elapsed, during which several chiefs entered and preparations appeared to be making for a council. At length Wawatam reëntered the lodge, followed by his wife, and both loaded with merchandise which they carried up to the chiefs and laid in a heap before them. Some moments of silence followed, at the end of which Wawatam pronounced a speech, every word of which to me was of extraordinary interest:

“Friends and relations,” he began, “what is it that I shall say? You know what I feel. You all have friends and brothers and children, whom as yourselves you love; and you—what would you experience, did you, like me behold your dearest friend—your brother—in the condition of a slave; a slave, exposed every moment to insult, and to menaces of death? This case, as you all know, is mine. See there (*pointing to myself*) my friend and brother among slaves—himself a slave!

“You all well know that long before the war began I adopted him as my brother. From that moment he became one of my family, so that no change of circumstances could break the cord which fastened us together.

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"He is my brother; and because I am your relation he is therefore your relation, too:— and how, being your relation, can he be your slave?

"On the day on which the war began you were fearful lest on this very account I should reveal your secret. You requested, therefore, that I would leave the fort, and even cross the lake. I did so; but I did it with reluctance. I did it with reluctance, notwithstanding that you, Menehwehna, who had the command in this enterprise, gave me your promise that you would protect my friend, delivering him from all danger, and giving him safely to me.

"The performance of this promise I now claim. I come not with empty hands to ask it. You, Menehwehna, best know whether or not, as it respects yourself, you have kept your word, but I bring these goods to buy off every claim which any man among you all may have on my brother, as his prisoner."

Wawatam having ceased, the pipes were again filled; and after they were finished a further period of silence followed. At the end of this, Menehwehna arose and gave his reply:

"My relation and brother," said he, "what you have spoken is the truth. We were acquainted with the friendship which subsisted between yourself and the Englishman in whose behalf you have now addressed us. We knew the danger of having our secret discovered,

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and the consequences which must follow; and you say truly that we requested you to leave the fort. This we did out of regard for you and your family; for if a discovery of our design had been made, you would have been blamed, whether guilty or not; and you would thus have been involved in difficulties from which you could not have extricated yourself.

"It is also true that I promised you to take care of your friend; and this promise I performed by desiring my son, at the moment of assault, to seek him out and bring him to my lodge. He went accordingly, but could not find him. The day after I sent him to Langlade's, when he was informed that your friend was safe; and had it not been that the Indians were then drinking the rum which had been found in the fort he would have brought him home with him, according to my orders.

"I am very glad to find that your friend has escaped. We accept your present; and you may take him home with you."

Wawatam thanked the assembled chiefs, and taking me by the hand, led me to his lodge, which was at the distance of a few yards only from the prison lodge. My entrance appeared to give joy to the whole family; food was immediately prepared for me; and I now ate the first hearty meal which I had made since my capture. I found myself one of the family; and but that I had still my fears as to the other Indians I felt as happy as the situation could allow.

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In the course of the next morning I was alarmed by a noise in the prison lodge; and looking through the openings of the lodge in which I was, I saw seven dead bodies of white men dragged forth. Upon my inquiry into the occasion I was informed that a certain chief called by the Canadians *Le Grand Sable* had not long before arrived from his winter's hunt; and that he, having been absent when the war begun, and being now desirous of manifesting to the Indians at large his hearty concurrence in what they had done, had gone into the prison lodge, and there, with his knife, put the seven men, whose bodies I had seen, to death.

Shortly after two of the Indians took one of the dead bodies which they chose as being the fattest, cut off the head, and divided the whole into five parts, one of which was put into each of five kettles, hung over as many fires kindled for this purpose at the door of the prison lodge. Soon after things were so far prepared a message came to our lodge with an invitation to *Wawatam* to assist at the feast.

An invitation to a feast is given by him who is the master of it. Small cuttings of cedar wood, of about four inches in length, supply the place of cards; and the bearer, by word of mouth, states the particulars.

*Wawatam* obeyed the summons, taking with him as is usual to the place of entertainment dish and spoon.

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After an absence of about half an hour he returned bringing in his dish a human hand and a large piece of flesh. He did not appear to relish the repast, but told me that it was then and always had been the custom among all the Indian nations when returning from war, or on overcoming their enemies, to make a war feast from among the slain. This, he said, inspired the warrior with courage in attack, and bred him to meet death with fearlessness.

In the evening of the same day a large canoe, such as those which came from Montreal, was seen advancing to the fort. It was full of men, and I distinguished several passengers. The Indian cry was made in the village; a general muster ordered; and, to the number of two hundred, they marched up to the fort where the canoe was expected to land. The canoe, suspecting nothing, came boldly to the fort, where the passengers, as being English traders, were seized, dragged through the water, beat, reviled, marched to the prison lodge, and there stripped of their clothes, and confined.

Of the English traders that fell into the hands of the Indians at the capture of the fort, Mr. Tracy was the only one who lost his life. Mr. Ezekiel Solomons and Mr. Henry Bostwick were taken by the Ottawa, and after the peace, carried down to Montreal, and there ransomed. Of ninety troops about seventy were killed; the rest, together with those of

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the posts in the Bay des Puants, and at the River St. Joseph, were also kept in safety by the Ottawa till the peace, and then either freely restored, or ransomed at Montreal.<sup>58</sup> The Ottawa never overcame their disgust at the neglect with which they had been treated in the beginning of the war by those who afterward desired their assistance as allies.

<sup>58</sup> The garrison of Fort Edward Augustus at Green Bay came at the summons of Captain Etherington to join that officer at L'Arbre Croche, being escorted across Lake Michigan by a band of friendly Menominee. The garrison at St. Joseph was massacred on May 25 by the Potawatomi; the four survivors of this massacre were carried to Detroit and there, on June 15, exchanged for certain Indians then in the hands of the besieged garrison at that place.—Editor.



## Chapter 13

### THE ADVENTURE OF THE BONES

IN the morning of the ninth of June a general council was held, at which it was agreed to remove to the island of Michilimackinac, as a more defensible situation, in the event of an attack by the English. The Indians had begun to entertain apprehensions of want of strength. No news had reached them from the Potawatomi, in the Bay des Puants; and they were uncertain whether or not the Monomins<sup>59</sup> would join them. They even feared that the Sioux would take the English side.

This resolution fixed, they prepared for a speedy retreat. At noon the camp was broken up, and we embarked, taking with us the prisoners that were still undisposed of. On our passage we encountered a gale of wind, and there were some appearances of danger. To avert it, a dog, of which the legs were previously tied together, was thrown into the lake; an offering designed to soothe the angry passions of some offended Manito.

<sup>59</sup> Manomines or Malomines. In the first syllable the substitution of *l* for *n*, and *n* for *l*, marks one of the differences in the Chippewa and Algonquin dialects. In the mouth of an Algonquin it is *Michilimackinac*; in that of a Chippewa, *Michinimackinac*.—Author.

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As we approached the island two women in the canoe in which I was began to utter melancholy and hideous cries. Precarious as my condition still remained I experienced some sensations of alarm from these dismal sounds, of which I could not then discover the occasion. Subsequently I learned that it is customary for the women on passing near the burial places of relations never to omit the practice of which I was now a witness, and by which they intend to denote their grief.

By the approach of evening we reached the island in safety, and the women were not long in erecting our cabins. In the morning there was a muster of the Indians, at which there were found three hundred and fifty fighting men.

In the course of the day there arrived a canoe from Detroit, with ambassadors, who endeavored to prevail on the Indians to repair thither to the assistance of Pontiac; but fear was now the prevailing passion. A guard was kept during the day and a watch by night, and alarms were very frequently spread. Had an enemy appeared all the prisoners would have been put to death; and I suspected that as an Englishman I should share their fate.

Several days had now passed, when one morning a continued alarm prevailed, and I saw the Indians running in a confused manner toward the beach. In a short time I learned that two large canoes from Montreal were in sight.

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All the Indian canoes were immediately manned, and those from Montreal were surrounded and seized as they turned the point behind which the flotilla had been concealed. The goods were consigned to a Mr. Levy, and would have been saved if the canoe men had called them French property; but they were terrified, and disguised nothing.

In the canoes was a large proportion of liquor, a dangerous acquisition, and which threatened disturbance among the Indians, even to the loss of their dearest friends. Wawatam, always watchful of my safety, no sooner heard the noise of drunkenness, which in the evening did not fail to begin, than he represented to me the danger of remaining in the village, and owned that he could not himself resist the temptation of joining his comrades in the debauch. That I might escape all mischief, he, therefore, requested that I would accompany him to the mountain, where I was to remain hidden till the liquor should be drunk.

We ascended the mountain accordingly. It is this mountain which constitutes that high land in the middle of the island, of which I have spoken before, as of a figure considered as resembling a turtle, and therefore called *michilimackinac*. It is thickly covered with wood, and very rocky toward the top. After walking more than half a mile we came to a large rock at the base of which was an opening, dark within, appearing to be the entrance of a cave.

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Here Wawatam recommended that I should take up my lodging, and by all means to remain till he returned.

On going into the cave, of which the entrance was nearly ten feet wide, I found the farther end to be rounded in its shape, like that of an oven but with a further aperture, too small, however, to be explored.

After thus looking around me I broke small branches from the trees and spread them for a bed; then wrapped myself in my blanket, and slept till daybreak.

On awaking I felt myself incommoded by some object upon which I lay; and removing it found it to be a bone. This I supposed to be that of a deer, or some other animal, and what might very naturally be looked for in the place in which I was; but when daylight visited my chamber I discovered with some feelings of horror that I was lying on nothing less than a heap of human bones and skulls which covered all the floor!

The day passed without the return of Wawatam, and without food. As night approached I found myself unable to meet its darkness in the charnel house, which, nevertheless, I had viewed free from uneasiness during the day. I chose, therefore, an adjacent bush for this night's lodging, and slept under it as before; but in the morning I awoke hungry and dispirited, and almost envying the dry bones, to the view of which I returned. At length the

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sound of a foot reached me, and my Indian friend appeared, making many apologies for his long absence, the cause of which was an unfortunate excess in the enjoyment of his liquor.

This point being explained, I mentioned the extraordinary sight that had presented itself in the cave to which he had commended my slumbers. He had never heard of its existence before; and upon examining the cave together we saw reason to believe that it had been anciently filled with human bodies.

On returning to the lodge I experienced a cordial reception from the family, which consisted of the wife of my friend, his two sons, of whom the eldest was married, and whose wife and a daughter of thirteen years of age, completed the list.

Wawatam related to the other Indians the adventure of the bones. All of them expressed surprise at hearing it, and declared that they had never been aware of the contents of this cave before. After visiting it, which they immediately did, almost every one offered a different opinion as to its history.

Some advanced that at a period when the waters overflowed the land (an event which makes a distinguished figure in the history of their world) the inhabitants of this island had fled into the cave, and been there drowned; others, that those same inhabitants, when the Huron made war upon them (as tradition

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says they did) hid themselves in the cave, and being discovered, were there massacred. For myself, I am disposed to believe that this cave was an ancient receptacle of the bones of prisoners sacrificed and devoured at war feasts. I have always observed that the Indians pay particular attention to the bones of sacrifices, preserving them unbroken, and depositing them in some place kept exclusively for that purpose.

## Chapter 14

### THE ARTS OF THE MEDICINE MEN

A FEW days after the occurrence of the incidents recorded in the preceding chapter, Menehwehna, whom I now found to be the great chief of the village of Michilimackinac, came to the lodge of my friend; and when the usual ceremony of smoking was finished, he observed that Indians were now daily arriving from Detroit, some of whom had lost relations or friends in the war, and who would certainly retaliate on any Englishman they found; upon which account his errand was to advise that I should be dressed like an Indian, an expedient whence I might hope to escape all future insult.

I could not but consent to the proposal, and the chief was so kind as to assist my friend and his family in effecting that very day the desired metamorphosis. My hair was cut off, and my head shaved with the exception of a spot on the crown of about twice the diameter of a crown-piece. My face was painted with three or four different colors, some parts of it red, and others black. A shirt was provided for me, painted with vermilion mixed with grease. A large collar of wampum was put round my neck, and another suspended on my

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breast. Both my arms were decorated with large bands of silver above the elbows, besides several smaller ones on the wrists; and my legs were covered with *mitasses*, a kind of hose made, as is the favorite fashion, of scarlet cloth. Over all I was to wear a scarlet blanket or mantle, and on my head a large bunch of feathers.

I parted, not without some regret, with the long hair which was natural to it and which I fancied to be ornamental; but the ladies of the family and of the village in general appeared to think my person improved, and now condescended to call me handsome, even among Indians.

Protected in a great measure by this disguise, I felt myself more at liberty than before; and the season being arrived in which my clerks from the interior were to be expected and some part of my property, as I had a right to hope, recovered, I begged the favor of Wawatam that he would enable me to pay a short visit to Michilimackinac. He did not fail to comply, and I succeeded in finding my clerks; but, either through the disturbed state of the country, as they represented to be the case, or through their misconduct, as I had reason to think, I obtained nothing; and nothing, or almost nothing, I now began to think, would be all that I should need during the rest of my life. To fish and to hunt, to collect a few skins, and exchange them for necessities,



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was all that I seemed destined to do and to acquire for the future.

I returned to the Indian village where at this time much scarcity of food prevailed. We were often for twenty-four hours without eating; and when in the morning we had no victuals for the day before us the custom was to black our faces with grease and charcoal, and exhibit through resignation a temper as cheerful as if in the midst of plenty.

A repetition of the evil, however, soon induced us to leave the island in search of food; and accordingly we departed for the Bay of Boutchitaouy, distant eight leagues, and where we found plenty of wild fowl and fish.

While in the bay my guardian's daughter-in-law was taken in labor of her first child. She was immediately removed out of the common lodge; and a small one for her separate accommodation was begun and finished by the women in less than half an hour.

The next morning we heard that she was very ill, and the family began to be much alarmed on her account; the more so, no doubt, because cases of difficult labor are very rare among Indian women. In this distress, Wawatam requested me to accompany him into the woods; and on our way informed me that if he could find a snake he should soon secure relief to his daughter-in-law.

On reaching some wet ground we speedily obtained the object of our search in a small

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snake of the kind called the garter snake. Wawatam seized it by the neck; and holding it fast while it coiled itself around his arm, he cut off its head, catching the blood in a cup that he had brought with him. This done, he threw away the snake, and carried home the blood, which he mixed with a quantity of water. Of this mixture he administered first one tablespoonful, and shortly afterwards a second. Within an hour the patient was safely delivered of a fine child: and Wawatam subsequently declared that the remedy to which he had resorted was one that never failed.

On the next day we left the Bay of Boutchitaouy; and the young mother, in high spirits, assisted in loading the canoe, barefooted, and knee deep in the water.

The medical information, the diseases and the remedies of the Indians, often engaged my curiosity during the period through which I was familiar with these nations; and I shall take this occasion to introduce a few particulars connected with their history.

The Indians are in general free from disorders; and an instance of their being subject to dropsy, gout, or stone, never came within my knowledge. Inflammations of the lungs are among their most ordinary complaints, and rheumatism still more so, especially with the aged. Their mode of life, in which they are so much exposed to the wet and cold, sleeping on

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the ground, and inhaling the night air, sufficiently accounts for their liability to these diseases. The remedies on which they most rely are emetics, cathartics, and the lancet; but especially the last. Bleeding is so favorite an operation among the women that they never lose an occasion of enjoying it, whether sick or well. I have sometimes bled a dozen women in a morning as they sat in a row along a fallen tree, beginning with the first—opening the vein—then proceeding to the second—and so on, having three or four individuals bleeding at the same time.

In most villages, and particularly in those of the Chipewa, this service was required of me; and no persuasion of mine could ever induce a woman to dispense with it.

In all parts of the country and among all the nations that I have seen, particular individuals arrogate to themselves the art of healing, but principally by means of pretended sorcery; and operations of this sort are always paid for by a present, made before they are begun. Indeed, whatever, as an impostor, may be the demerits of the operator, his reward may generally be said to be fairly earned by dint of corporal labor.

I was once present at a performance of this kind in which the patient was a female child of about twelve years of age. Several of the elder chiefs were invited to the scene; and the same compliment was paid to myself on account of

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the medical skill for which it was pleased to give me credit.

The physician (so to call him) seated himself on the ground; and before him on a new stroud blanket was placed a basin of water in which were three bones, the larger ones, as it appeared to me, of a swan's wing. In his hand he had his *shishiquoi*, or rattle, with which he beat time to his *medicine-song*. The sick child lay on a blanket near the physician. She appeared to have much fever, and a severe oppression of the lungs, breathing with difficulty, and betraying symptoms of the last stage of consumption.

After singing for some time the physician took one of the bones out of the basin: the bone was hollow; and one end being applied to the breast of the patient, he put the other into his mouth in order to remove the disorder by suction. Having persevered in this as long as he thought proper, he suddenly seemed to force the bone into his mouth and swallow it. He now acted the part of one suffering severe pain; but presently finding relief, he made a long speech, and after this returned to singing, and to the accompaniment of his rattle. With the latter, during his song, he struck his head, breast, sides and back; at the same time straining as if to vomit forth the bone.

Relinquishing this attempt, he applied himself to suction a second time, and with the second of the three bones; and this also he soon seemed to swallow.

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Upon its disappearance he began to distort himself in the most frightful manner, using every gesture which could convey the idea of pain; at length he succeeded, or pretended to succeed, in throwing up one of the bones. This was handed about to the spectators, and strictly examined; but nothing remarkable could be discovered. Upon this he went back to his song and rattle: and after some time threw up the second of the two bones. In the groove of this the physician, upon examination, found and displayed to all present a small white substance, resembling a piece of the quill of a feather. It was passed round the company from one to the other; and declared by the physician to be the thing causing the disorder of his patient.

The multitude believe that these physicians, whom the French call *jongleurs*, or jugglers, can inflict as well as remove disorders. They believe that by drawing the figure of any person in sand or ashes, or on clay, or by considering any object as the figure of a person and then pricking it with a sharp stick or other substance, or doing in any other manner that which done to a living body would cause pain or injury, the individual represented, or supposed to be represented, will suffer accordingly. On the other hand the mischief being done, another physician of equal pretension can by suction remove it. Unfortunately, however, the operations which I have described were

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not successful in the instance referred to; for on the day after they had taken place the girl died.

With regard to flesh wounds the Indians certainly effect astonishing cures. Here, also much that is fantastic occurs, but the success of their practice evinces something solid.

At the Sault de Ste. Marie I knew a man who in the result of a quarrel received the stroke of an axe in his side. The blow was so violent and the axe driven so deep that the wretch who held it could not withdraw it, but left it in the wound and fled. Shortly after the man was found and brought in to the fort where several other Indians came to his assistance. Among these, one, who was a physician, immediately withdrew in order to fetch his *penegusan*, or medicine bag, with which he soon returned. The eyes of the sufferer were fixed, his teeth closed, and his case apparently desperate.

The physician took from his bag a small portion of a very white substance, resembling that of a bone; this he scraped into a little water and forcing open the jaws of the patient with a stick he poured the mixture down his throat. What followed was that in a very short space of time the wounded man moved his eyes, and beginning to vomit threw up a small lump of clotted blood.

The physician now, and not before, examined the wound from which I could see the

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breath escape, and from which a part of the omentum depended. This the physician did not set about to restore to its place; but cutting it away, minced it into small pieces and made his patient swallow it.

The man was then carried to his lodge where I visited him daily. By the sixth day he was able to walk about; and within a month he grew quite well except that he was troubled with a cough. Twenty years after his misfortune he was still alive.

Another man, being on his wintering ground and from home hunting beaver, was crossing a lake covered with smooth ice with two beavers on his back, when his foot slipped and he fell. At his side in his belt was his axe, the blade of which came upon the joint of his wrist; and the weight of his body coming upon the blade, his hand was completely separated from his arm with the exception of a small piece of the skin. He had to walk three miles to his lodge which was thus far away. The skin, which alone retained his hand to his arm, he cut through with the same axe which had done the rest; and fortunately having on a shirt, he took it off, tore it up, and made a strong ligature above the wrist, so as in some measure to avoid the loss of blood. On reaching his lodge he cured the wound himself by the mere use of simples. I was a witness to its perfect healing.

I have said that these physicians, jugglers,

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or practitioners of pretended sorcery, are supposed to be capable of inflicting diseases; and I may add that they are sometimes themselves sufferers on this account. In one instance I saw one of them killed by a man who charged him with having brought his brother to death by malefic arts. The accuser in his rage thrust his knife into the belly of the accused and ripped it open. The latter caught his bowels in his arms and thus walked toward his lodge, gathering them up from time to time as they escaped his hold. His lodge was at no considerable distance and he reached it alive and died in it.



## Chapter 15

### REMOVAL TO THE AU SABLE

OUR next encampment was on the Island of Saint Martin, off Cape St. Ignace, so called from the Jesuit mission of St. Ignatius to the Hurons formerly established there. Our object was to fish for sturgeon, which we did with great success; and here in the enjoyment of a plentiful and excellent supply of food we remained until the twentieth day of August. At this time, the autumn being at hand, and a sure prospect of increased security from hostile Indians afforded, Wawatam proposed going to his intended wintering ground. The removal was a subject of the greatest joy to myself on account of the frequent insults to which I had still to submit from the Indians of our band or village; and to escape from which I would freely have gone almost anywhere. At our wintering ground we were to be alone; for the Indian families in the countries of which I write separate in the winter season for the convenience as well of subsistence as of the chase, and re-associate in the spring and summer.

In preparation our first business was to sail for Michilimackinac, where, being arrived, we procured from a Canadian trader on credit

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some trifling articles together with ammunition and two bushels of maize. This done we steered directly for Lake Michigan. At L'Arbre Croche we stopped one day on a visit to the Ottawas where all the people, and particularly Okinochumaki, the chief, the same who took me from the Chippewa, behaved with great civility and kindness. The chief presented me with a bag of maize. It is the Ottawa, it will be remembered, who raise this grain for the market of Michilimackinac.

Leaving L'Arbre Croche, we proceeded direct to the mouth of the River Aux Sables<sup>60</sup> on the south side of the lake and distant about a hundred and fifty miles from Fort Michilimackinac. On our voyage we passed several deep bays and rivers, and I found the banks of the lake to consist in mere sands without any appearance of verdure, the sand drifting from one hill to another like snow in winter. Hence all the rivers which here entered the lake are as much entitled to the epithet of *sandy* as that

<sup>60</sup> There is a modern Big Sable River in northern Mason County, Michigan, and near its mouth a headland known as Point Sable juts into Lake Michigan. On D'Anville's map of North America, published in 1746, the Aux Sables River is represented corresponding with modern Pentwater River. It is clear that Henry's wintering place was in the vicinity of modern Ludington, Michigan, but whether on the Big Sable, the Notepseakan, or the Pentwater River, is uncertain. At the mouth of the Notepseakan (site of modern Ludington) occurred the death of Father Marquette in 1675.—Editor.

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to which we were bound. They are also distinguished by another particularity always observable in similar situations. The current of the stream being met when the wind is contrary by the waves of the lake, it is driven back, and the sands of the shore are at the same time washed into its mouth. In consequence the river is able to force a passage into the lake, broad only in proportion to its utmost strength; while it hollows for itself behind the sandbanks a basin of one, two, or three miles across. In these rivers we killed many wild fowl and beaver.

To kill beaver we used to go several miles up the rivers before the approach of night, and after the dusk came on, suffer the canoe to drift gently down the current without noise. The beaver in this part of the evening come abroad to procure food or materials for repairing their habitations; and as they are not alarmed by the canoe, they often pass it within gun shot.

While we thus hunted along our way I enjoyed a personal freedom of which I had been long deprived, and became as expert in the Indian pursuits as the Indians themselves.

On entering the River Aux Sables, Wawatam took a dog, tied its feet together, and threw it into the stream, uttering at the same time a long prayer which he addressed to the Great Spirit, supplicating his blessing on the chase, and his aid in the support of the family through

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the dangers of a long winter. Our lodge was fifteen miles above the mouth of the stream. The principal animals which the country afforded were the stag, or red deer, the common American deer, the bear, raccoon, beaver, and marten.

The beaver feeds in preference on young wood of the birch, aspen, and poplar tree;<sup>61</sup> but in defect of these, on any other tree, those of the pine and fir kinds excepted. These latter it employs only for building its dams and houses. In wide meadows where no wood is to be found it resorts for all its purposes to the roots of the rush and water lily. It consumes great quantities of food, whether of roots or wood; and hence often reduces itself to the necessity of removing into a new quarter. Its house has an arched dome-like roof, of an elliptical figure, and rises from three to four feet above the surface of the water. It is always entirely surrounded by water; but in the banks adjacent the animal provides holes or *washes*, of which the entrance is below the surface, and to which it retreats on the first alarm.

The female beaver usually produces two young at a time, but not infrequently more. During the first year the young remain with their parents. In the second, they occupy an adjoining apartment and assist in building and

<sup>61</sup> *Populus nigra*, called by the Canadians, *liard*.—  
Author.

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in procuring food. At two years old they part and build houses of their own, but often rove about for a considerable time before they fix upon a spot. There are beavers called by the Indians *old bachelors*, who live by themselves, build no houses, and work at no dams, but shelter themselves in holes. The usual method of taking these is by traps, formed of iron or logs, and baited with branches of poplar.

According to the Indians the beaver is much given to jealousy. If a strange male approaches the cabin a battle immediately ensues. Of this the female remains an unconcerned spectator, careless to which party the law of conquest may assign her. Among the beaver which we killed those who were with me pretended to show demonstrations of this fact, some of the skins of the males, and almost all of the older ones, bearing marks of violence, while none were ever to be seen on the skins of the females.

The Indians add that the male is as constant as he is jealous, never attaching himself to more than one female; while the female on her side is always fond of strangers.

The most common way of taking the beaver is that of breaking up its house, which is done with trenching tools during the winter, when the ice is strong enough to allow of approaching them, and when, also, the fur is in its most valuable state.

Breaking up the house, however, is only a

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preparatory step. During this operation the family make their escape to one or more of their washes. These are to be discovered by striking the ice along the bank, and where the holes are a hollow sound is returned. After discovering and searching many of these in vain we often found the whole family together in the same wash. I was taught occasionally to distinguish a full wash from an empty one by the motion of the water above its entrance occasioned by the breathing of the animals concealed in it. From the washes they must be taken out with the hands; and in doing this the hunter sometimes receives severe wounds from their teeth. While a hunter I thought with the Indians that the beaver flesh was very good; but after that of the ox was again within my reach I could not relish it. The tail is accounted a luxurious morsel.

Beavers, say the Indians, were formerly a people endowed with speech, not less than with the other noble faculties they possess; but the Great Spirit has taken this away from them lest they should grow superior in understanding to mankind.

The raccoon was another object of our chase. It was my practice to go out in the evening with dogs, accompanied by the youngest son of my guardian, to hunt this animal. The raccoon never leaves its hiding place till after sunset.

As soon as a dog falls on a fresh track of the

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raccoon he gives notice by a cry, and immediately pursues. His barking enables the hunter to follow. The raccoon, which travels slowly and is soon overtaken, makes for a tree on which he remains till shot.

After the falling of the snow nothing more is necessary for taking the raccoon than to follow the track of his feet. In this season he seldom leaves his habitation; and he never lays up any food. I have found six at a time in the hollow of one tree lying upon each other, and nearly in a torpid state. In more than one instance I have ascertained that they have lived six weeks without food. The mouse is their principal prey.

Raccoon hunting was my more particular and daily employ. I usually went out at the first dawn of day and seldom returned till sunset, or till I had laden myself with as many animals as I could carry. By degrees I became familiarized with this kind of life; and had it not been for the idea of which I could not divest my mind, that I was living among savages, and for the whispers of a lingering hope that I should one day be released from it—or if I could have forgotten that I had ever been otherwise than as I then was—I could have enjoyed as much happiness in this as in any other situation.

## Chapter 16

### LOST IN THE WILDERNESS

ONE evening on my return from hunting I found the fire put out and the opening in the top of the lodge covered over with skins, by this means excluding as much as possible external light. I further observed that the ashes were removed from the fireplace, and that dry sand was spread where they had been. Soon after a fire was made without side the cabin in the open air and a kettle hung over it to boil.

I now supposed that a feast was in preparation. I supposed so only; for it would have been indecorous to inquire into the meaning of what I saw. No person among the Indians themselves would use this freedom. Good breeding requires that the spectator should patiently wait the result.

As soon as the darkness of night had arrived the family, including myself, were invited into the lodge. I was now requested not to speak as a feast was about to be given to the dead, whose spirits delight in uninterrupted silence.

As we entered each was presented with his wooden dish and spoon, after receiving which we seated ourselves. The door was next shut, and we remained in perfect darkness.



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The master of the family was the master of the feast. Still in the dark he asked every one by turn for his dish and put into each two boiled ears of maize. The whole being served, he began to speak. In his discourse, which lasted half an hour, he called upon the manes of his deceased relations and friends, beseeching them to be present to assist him in the chase, and to partake of the food which he had prepared for them. When he had ended we proceeded to eat our maize, which we did without other noise than what was occasioned by our teeth. The maize was not half boiled, and it took me an hour to consume my share. I was requested not to break the spikes,<sup>62</sup> as this would be displeasing to the departed spirits of their friends.

When all was eaten Wawatam made another speech, with which the ceremony ended. A new fire was kindled with fresh sparks from flint and steel; and the pipes being smoked, the spikes were carefully buried in a hole made in the ground for that purpose within the lodge. This done, the whole family began a dance, Wawatam singing and beating a drum. The dance continued the greater part of the night, to the great pleasure of the lodge. The night of the feast was that of the first day of November.

On the twentieth of December we took an account of the produce of our hunt and found

<sup>62</sup> The grains of maize, called also Indian corn, grow in compact cells round a spike.—Author.

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that we had a hundred beaver skins, as many raccoons, and a large quantity of dried venison; all which was secured from the wolves by being placed upon a scaffold.

A hunting excursion into the interior of the country was resolved on; and early the next morning the bundles were made up by the women for each person to carry. I remarked that the bundle given to me was the lightest, and those carried by the women the largest and heaviest of the whole.

On the first day of our march we advanced about twenty miles and then encamped. Being somewhat fatigued, I could not hunt; but Wawatam killed a stag not far from our encampment. The next morning we moved our lodge to the carcass. At this station we remained two days, employed in drying the meat. The method was to cut it into slices of the thickness of a steak, and then hang it over the fire in the smoke. On the third day we removed and marched till two o'clock in the afternoon.

While the women were busy in erecting and preparing the lodges I took my gun and strolled away, telling Wawatam that I intended to look out for some fresh meat for supper. He answered that he would do the same; and on this we both left the encampment in different directions.

The sun being visible I entertained no fear of losing my way; but in following several

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tracks of animals in momentary expectation of falling in with the game I proceeded to a considerable distance, and it was not till near sunset that I thought of returning. The sky, too, had become overcast, and I was therefore left without the sun for my guide. In this situation I walked as fast as I could, always supposing myself to be approaching our encampment, till at length it became so dark that I ran against the trees.

I became convinced that I was lost; and I was alarmed by the reflection that I was in a country entirely strange to me, and in danger from strange Indians. With the flint of my gun I made a fire, and then laid me down to sleep. In the night it rained hard. I awoke cold and wet; and as soon as light appeared I recommenced my journey, sometimes walking and sometimes running, unknowing where to go, bewildered, and like a madman.

Toward evening I reached the border of a large lake of which I could scarcely discern the opposite shore. I had never heard of a lake in this part of the country, and therefore felt myself removed further than ever from the object of my pursuit. To tread back my steps appeared to be the most likely means of delivering myself; and I accordingly determined to turn my face directly from the lake, and keep this direction as nearly as I could.

A heavy snow began to descend and night soon afterward came on. On this I stopped

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and made a fire, and stripping a tree of its sheet of bark, lay down under it to shelter me from the snow. All night at small distances the wolves howled around; and to me seemed to be acquainted with my misfortune.

Amid thoughts the most distracted I was able at length to fall asleep; but it was not long before I awoke, refreshed, and wondering at the terror to which I had yielded myself. That I could really have wanted the means of recovering my way appeared to me almost incredible; and the recollection of it like a dream, or as a circumstance which must have proceeded from the loss of my senses. Had this not happened I could never, as I now thought, have suffered so long without calling to mind the lessons which I had received from my Indian friend for the very purpose of being useful to me in difficulties of this kind. These were that generally speaking the tops of pine trees lean toward the rising of the sun; that moss grows toward the roots of trees on the side which faces the north; and that the limbs of trees are most numerous and largest on that which faces the south.

Determined to direct my feet by these marks and persuaded that I should thus sooner or later reach Lake Michigan, which I reckoned to be distant about sixty miles, I began my march at break of day. I had not taken, nor wished to take, any nourishment, since I left the encampment; I had with me my

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gun and ammunition, and was therefore under no anxiety in regard to food. The snow lay about half a foot in depth.

My eyes were now employed upon the trees. When their tops leaned different ways I looked to the moss, or to the branches; and by connecting one with another, I found the means of traveling with some degree of confidence. At four o'clock in the afternoon the sun, to my inexpressible joy, broke from the clouds, and I had now no further need of examining the trees.

In going down the side of a lofty hill I saw a herd of red deer approaching. Desirous of killing one of them for food, I hid myself in the bushes, and on a large one coming near, presented my piece, which missed fire on account of the priming having been wetted. The animals walked along without taking the least alarm; and having reloaded my gun, I followed them and presented a second time. But now a disaster of the heaviest kind had befallen me; for on attempting to fire I found that I had lost the cock. I had previously lost the screw by which it was fastened to the lock; and to prevent this from being lost also I had tied it in its place with a leather string: the lock, to prevent its catching in the bows, I had carried under my molton coat.

Of all the sufferings which I had experienced this seemed to me the most severe. I was in a strange country, and knew not how far I had

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to go. I had been three days without food; I was now without the means of procuring myself either food or fire. Despair had almost overpowered me: but I soon resigned myself into the hands of that Providence whose arm had so often saved me, and returned on my track in search of what I had lost. My search was in vain, and I resumed my course, wet, cold and hungry, and almost without clothing.

## Chapter 17

### A BEAR HUNT

THE sun was setting fast when I descended a hill at the bottom of which was a small lake entirely frozen over. On drawing near I saw a beaver lodge in the middle offering some faint prospect of food; but I found it already broken up. While I looked at it, it suddenly occurred to me that I had seen it before; and turning my eyes round the place I discovered a small tree which I had myself cut down in the autumn when in company with my friends I had taken the beaver. I was no longer at a loss, but knew both the distance and the route to the encampment. The latter was only to follow the course of a small stream of water which ran from the encampment to the lake on which I stood. An hour before I had thought myself the most miserable of men; and now I leaped for joy and called myself the happiest.

The whole of the night and through all of the succeeding day I walked up the rivulet, and at sunset reached the encampment, where I was received with the warmest expressions of pleasure by the family, by whom I had been given up for lost after a long and vain search for me in the woods.

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## Alexander Henry

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Some days elapsed, during which I rested myself and recruited my strength: after this I resumed the chase, secure that as the snow had now fallen I could always return by the way I went.

In the course of the month of January I happened to observe that the trunk of a very large pine tree was much torn by the claws of a bear, made both in going up and down. On further examination I saw that there was a large opening in the upper part near which the smaller branches were broken. From these marks and from the additional circumstance that there were no tracks on the snow there was reason to believe that a bear lay concealed in the tree.

On returning to the lodge I communicated my discovery; and it was agreed that all the family should go together in the morning to assist in cutting down the tree, the girth of which was not less than three fathoms. The women at first opposed the undertaking because our axes, being only of a pound and a half weight, were not well adapted to so heavy a labor; but the hope of finding a large bear and obtaining from its fat a great quantity of oil, an article at the time much wanted, at length prevailed.

Accordingly in the morning we surrounded the tree, both men and women, as many at a time as could conveniently work at it; and here we toiled like beaver till the sun went



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down. This day's work carried us about half way through the trunk; and the next morning we renewed the attack, continuing it till about two o'clock in the afternoon, when the tree fell to the ground. For a few minutes everything remained quiet, and I feared that all our expectations were disappointed; but as I advanced to the opening there came out, to the great satisfaction of all our party, a bear of extraordinary size, which, before she had proceeded many yards, I shot.

The bear being dead, all my assistants approached, and all, but more particularly my old mother (as I was wont to call her), took her head in their hands, stroking and kissing it several times; begging a thousand pardons for taking away her life: calling her their relation and grandmother; and requesting her not to lay the fault upon them, since it was truly an Englishman that had put her to death.

This ceremony was not of long duration; and if it was I that killed their grandmother they were not themselves behindhand in what remained to be performed. The skin being taken off, we found the fat in several places six inches deep. This being divided into two parts, loaded two persons; and the flesh parts were as much as four persons could carry. In all, the carcass must have exceeded five hundred-weight.

As soon as we reached the lodge the bear's head was adorned with all the trinkets in the

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## Alexander Henry

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possession of the family, such as silver arm bands and wrist bands, and belts of wampum; and then laid upon a scaffold, set up for its reception within the lodge. Near the nose was placed a large quantity of tobacco.

The next morning no sooner appeared than preparations were made for a feast to the manes. The lodge was cleaned and swept; and the head of the bear lifted up, and a new stroud blanket, which had never been used before, spread under it. The pipes were now lit; and Wawatam blew tobacco smoke into the nostrils of the bear, telling me to do the same, and thus appease the anger of the bear on account of my having killed her. I endeavored to persuade my benefactor and friendly adviser that she no longer had any life, and assured him that I was under no apprehension from her displeasure; but the first proposition obtained no credit, and the second gave but little satisfaction.

At length the feast being ready, Wawatam commenced a speech resembling in many things his address to the manes of his relations and departed companions; but having this peculiarity, that he here deplored the necessity under which men labored thus to destroy their *friends*. He represented, however, that the misfortune was unavoidable, since without doing so, they could by no means subsist. The speech ended, we all ate heartily of the bear's flesh; and even the head itself, after

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## Trabels and Adventures

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remaining three days on the scaffold, was put into the kettle.

It is only the female bear that makes her winter lodging in the upper parts of trees, a practice by which her young are secured from the attacks of wolves and other animals. She brings forth in the winter season; and remains in her lodge till the cubs have gained some strength.

The male always lodges in the ground under the roots of trees. He takes to this habitation as soon as the snow falls, and remains there till it has disappeared. The Indians remark that the bear comes out in the spring with the same fat which he carried in in the autumn; but after exercise of only a few days, becomes lean. Excepting for a short part of the season, the male lives constantly alone.

The fat of our bear was melted down, and the oil filled six porcupine skins.<sup>63</sup> A part of the meat was cut into strips, and fire dried, after which it was put into the vessels containing the oil, where it remained in perfect preservation until the middle of summer.

February, in the country and by the people where and among whom I was, is called the Moon of Hard, or Crusted Snow; for now the snow can bear a man, or at least dogs, in pursuit of animals of the chase. At this season the stag is very successfully hunted, his feet

<sup>63</sup> The animal which, in America, is called a porcupine, is a hedge-hog or urchin.—Author.

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breaking through at every step, and the crust upon the snow cutting his legs with its sharp edges, to the very bone. He is consequently, in this distress, an easy prey; and it frequently happened that we killed twelve in the short space of two hours. By this means we were soon put into possession of four thousand weight of dried venison, which was to be carried on our backs, along with all the rest of our wealth for seventy miles, the distance of our encampment from that part of the lake shore at which in the autumn we left our canoes. This journey it was our next business to perform.

## Chapter 18

### DEATH OF A CHILD

OUR venison and furs and peltries were to be disposed of at Michilimackinac, and it was now the season for carrying them to market. The women therefore prepared our loads; and the morning of departure being come, we set off at daybreak, and continued our march till two o'clock in the afternoon. Where we stopped we erected a scaffold on which we deposited the bundles we had brought, and returned to our encampment, which we reached in the evening. In the morning we carried fresh loads, which being deposited with the rest, we returned a second time in the evening. This we repeated till all was forwarded one stage. Then removing our lodge to the place of deposit, we carried our goods with the same patient toil a second stage; and so on, till we were at no great distance from the shores of the lake.

Arrived here, we turned our attention to sugar making, the management of which, as I have before related, belongs to the women, the men cutting wood for the fires, and hunting and fishing. In the midst of this we were joined by several lodges of Indians, most of whom were of the family to which I belonged,

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## Alexander Henry

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and had wintered near us. The lands belonged to this family, and it had therefore the exclusive right to hunt on them. This is according to the custom of the people; for each family has its own lands. I was treated very civilly by all the lodges.

Our society had been a short time enlarged by this arrival of our friends, when an accident occurred which filled all the village with anxiety and sorrow. A little child belonging to one of our neighbors fell into a kettle of boiling syrup. It was instantly snatched out, but with little hope of its recovery.

So long, however, as it lived a continual feast was observed; and this was made to the Great Spirit and Master of Life, that he might be pleased to save and heal the child. At this feast I was a constant guest; and often found difficulty in eating the large quantity of food, which on such occasions as these is put upon each man's dish. The Indians accustom themselves both to eat much and to fast much, with facility.

Several sacrifices were also offered; among which were dogs, killed and hung upon the tops of poles, with the addition of stroud blankets and other articles. These, also, were given to the Great Spirit in humble hope that he would give efficacy to the medicines employed.

The child died. To preserve the body from the wolves it was placed upon a scaffold, where

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it remained till we went to the lake, on the border of which was the burial ground of the family.

On our arrival there, which happened in the beginning of April, I did not fail to attend the funeral. The grave was made of a large size, and the whole of the inside lined with birch bark. On the bark was laid the body of the child, accompanied with an axe, a pair of snowshoes, a small kettle, several pairs of common shoes, its own strings of beads, and—because it was a girl—a carrying-belt and a paddle. The kettle was filled with meat.

All this was again covered with bark; and at about two feet nearer the surface logs were laid across, and these again covered with bark, so that the earth might by no means fall upon the corpse.

The last act before the burial, performed by the mother crying over the dead body of her child, was that of taking from it a lock of hair for a memorial. While she did this I endeavored to console her by offering the usual arguments, that the child was happy in being released from the miseries of this present life, and that she should forbear to grieve, because it would be restored to her in another world, happy and everlasting. She answered that she knew it, and that by the lock of hair she should discover her daughter; for she would take it with her. In this she alluded to the day when some pious hand would place in her own

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grave, along with the carrying-belt and paddle, this little relic, hallowed by maternal tears.

I have frequently inquired into the ideas and opinions of the Indians in regard to futurity, and always found that they were somewhat different in different individuals.

Some suppose their souls to remain in this world, although invisible to human eyes; and capable, themselves, of seeing and hearing their friends, and also of assisting them in moments of distress and danger.

Others dismiss from the mortal scene the unembodied spirit, and send it to a distant world, or country, in which it receives reward or punishment, according to the life which it has led in its prior state. Those who have lived virtuously are transported into a place abounding with every luxury, with deer and all other animals of the woods and water, and where the earth produces, in their greatest perfection, all its sweetest fruits. While, on the other hand, those who have violated or neglected the duties of this life are removed to a barren soil, where they wander up and down among rocks and morasses, and are stung by gnats as large as pigeons.



## Chapter 19

### RETURN TO MACKINAC

WHILE we remained on the border of the lake a watch was kept every night in the apprehension of a speedy attack from the English, who were expected to avenge the massacre of Michilimackinac. The immediate grounds of this apprehension were the constant dreams to this effect of the more aged women. I endeavored to persuade them that nothing of the kind would take place; but their fears were not to be subdued.

Amid these alarms there came a report concerning a real, though less formidable enemy, discovered in our neighborhood. This was a panther which one of our young men had seen and which animal sometimes attacks and carries away the Indian children. Our camp was immediately on the alert, and we set off into the woods, about twenty in number. We had not proceeded more than a mile before the dogs found the panther, and pursued him to a tree, on which he was shot. He was of a large size.

On the twenty-fifth of April we embarked for Michilimackinac. At La Grande Traverse<sup>64</sup> we met a large party of Indians who appeared

<sup>64</sup> Modern Grand Traverse Bay.—Editor.

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to labor, like ourselves, under considerable alarm; and who dared proceed no farther, lest they should be destroyed by the English. Frequent councils of the united bands were held; and interrogations were continually put to myself as to whether or not I knew of any design to attack them. I found that they believed it possible for me to have a foreknowledge of events, and to be informed by dreams of all things doing at a distance.

Protestations of my ignorance were received with but little satisfaction, and incurred the suspicion of a design to conceal my knowledge. On this account therefore, or because I saw them tormented with fears which had nothing but imagination to rest upon, I told them at length that I knew there was no enemy to insult them; and that they might proceed to Michilimackinac without danger from the English. I further, and with more confidence, declared that if ever my countrymen returned to Michilimackinac I would recommend them to their favor on account of the good treatment which I had received from them. Thus encouraged they embarked at an early hour the next morning. In crossing the bay we experienced a storm of thunder and lightning.

Our port was the village of L'Arbre Croche, which we reached in safety, and where we stayed till the following day. At this village we found several persons who had been lately at Michilimackinac, and from them we had

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the satisfaction of learning that all was quiet there. The remainder of our voyage was therefore performed with confidence.

In the evening of the twenty-seventh we landed at the fort, which now contained only two French traders. The Indians who had arrived before us were very few in number; and by all who were of our party I was used very kindly. I had the entire freedom both of the fort and camp.

Wawatam and myself settled our stock and paid our debts; and this done, I found that my share of what was left consisted in a hundred beaver skins, sixty raccoon skins, and six otter, of the total value of about one hundred and sixty dollars. With these earnings of my winter's toil I proposed to purchase some clothes of which I was much in need, having been six months without a shirt; but on inquiring into the prices of goods I found that all my funds would not go far. I was able, however, to buy two shirts at ten pounds of beaver each; a pair of leggings, or pantaloons, of scarlet cloth, which with the ribbon to garnish them fashionably, cost me fifteen pounds of beaver; a blanket, at twenty pounds of beaver; and some other articles at proportionable rates. In this manner my wealth was soon reduced; but not before I had laid in a good stock of ammunition and tobacco. To the use of the latter I had become much attached during the winter. It was my principal

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recreation after returning from the chase; for my companions in the lodge were unaccustomed to pass the time in conversation. Among the Indians the topics of conversation are but few, and limited for the most part to the transactions of the day, the number of animals which they have killed, and of those which have escaped their pursuit; and other incidents of the chase. Indeed, the causes of taciturnity among the Indians may be easily understood if we consider how many occasions of speech, which present themselves to us, are utterly unknown to them; the records of history, the pursuits of science, the disquisitions of philosophy, the systems of politics, the business and the amusements of the day, and the transactions of the four corners of the world.

Eight days had passed in tranquillity when there arrived a band of Indians from the Bay of Saguenaum.<sup>65</sup> They had assisted at the siege of Detroit, and came to muster as many recruits for that service as they could. For my own part, I was soon informed that as I was the only Englishman in the place they proposed to kill me in order to give their friends a mess of English broth to raise their courage.

This intelligence was not of the most agreeable kind; and in consequence of receiving it, I requested my friend to carry me to the Sault de Ste. Marie, at which place I knew the

<sup>65</sup> Modern Saginaw Bay.—Editor.

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Indians to be peaceably inclined, and that M. Cadotte enjoyed a powerful influence over their conduct. They considered M. Cadotte as their chief; and he was not only my friend, but a friend to the English. It was by him that the Chipewa of Lake Superior were prevented from joining Pontiac.

Wawatam was not slow to exert himself for my preservation; but, leaving Michilimackinac in the night, transported myself and all his lodge to Point St. Ignace, on the opposite side of the strait. Here we remained till daylight, and then went into the Bay of Boutchitaouy, in which we spent three days in fishing and hunting, and where we found plenty of wild fowl. Leaving the bay we made for the Isle aux Outardes, where we were obliged to put in on account of the wind's coming ahead. We proposed sailing for the Sault the next morning.

But when the morning came Wawatam's wife complained that she was sick, adding that she had had bad dreams, and knew that if we went to the Sault we should all be destroyed. To have argued at this time against the infallibility of dreams would have been extremely inadvisable, since I should have appeared to be guilty, not only of an odious want of faith but also of a still more odious want of sensibility to the possible calamities of a family which had done so much for the alleviation of mine. I was silent; but the disappointment

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seemed to seal my fate. No prospect opened to console me. To return to Michilimackinac could only ensure my destruction; and to remain at the island was to brave almost equal danger, since it lay in the direct route between the fort and the Missisaki, along which the Indians from Detroit were hourly expected to pass on the business of their mission. I doubted not but, taking advantage of the solitary situation of the family, they would carry into execution their design of killing me.

## Chapter 20

### FLIGHT TO THE SAULT

UNABLE, therefore, to take any part in the direction of our course, but a prey at the same time to the most anxious thoughts as to my own condition, I passed all the day on the highest part, to which I could climb, of a tall tree, and whence the lake on both sides of the island lay open to my view. Here I might hope to learn at the earliest possible moment the approach of canoes, and by this means be warned in time to conceal myself.

On the second morning I returned as soon as it was light to my watch-tower, on which I had not been long before I discovered a sail coming from Michilimackinac.

The sail was a white one, and much larger than those usually employed by the northern Indians. I therefore indulged a hope that it might be a Canadian canoe, on its voyage to Montreal; and that I might be able to prevail upon the crew to take me with them and thus release me from all my troubles.

My hopes continued to gain strength; for I soon persuaded myself that the manner in which the paddles were used on board the canoe was Canadian, and not Indian. My spirits were elated; but disappointment had

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become so usual with me that I could not suffer myself to look to the event with any strength of confidence.

Enough, however, appeared at length to demonstrate itself to induce me to descend the tree and repair to the lodge, with my tidings and schemes of liberty. The family congratulated me on the approach of so fair an opportunity of escape; and my father and brother (for he was alternately each of these) lit his pipe and presented it to me saying, "My son, this may be the last time that ever you and I shall smoke out of the same pipe! I am sorry to part with you. You know the affection which I always have borne you, and the dangers to which I have exposed myself and family to preserve you from your enemies; and I am happy to find that my efforts promise not to have been in vain." At this time a boy came into the lodge, informing us that the canoe had come from Michilimackinac and was bound to the Sault de Ste. Marie. It was manned by three Canadians, and was carrying home Madame Cadotte, the wife of M. Cadotte already mentioned.

My hopes of going to Montreal being now dissipated, I resolved on accompanying Madame Cadotte, with her permission, to the Sault. On communicating my wishes to Madame Cadotte, she cheerfully acceded to them. Madame Cadotte, as I have already mentioned, was an Indian woman of the Chippewa



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nation; and she was very generally respected.

My departure fixed upon, I returned to the lodge, where I packed up my wardrobe, consisting of my two shirts, pair of leggings, and blanket. Besides these I took a gun and ammunition, presenting what remained further to my host. I also returned the silver arm-bands with which the family had decorated me the year before.

We now exchanged farewells, with an emotion entirely reciprocal. I did not quit the lodge without the most grateful sense of the many acts of goodness which I had experienced in it, nor without the sincerest respect for the virtues which I had witnessed among its members. All the family accompanied me to the beach; and the canoe had no sooner put off, than Wawatam commenced an address to the Kichi Manito, beseeching him to take care of me, his brother, till we should next meet. This, he had told me, would not be long, as he intended to return to Michilimackinac for a short time only, and would then follow me to the Sault. We had proceeded to too great a distance to allow of our hearing his voice, before Wawatam had ceased to offer up his prayers.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Thus appropriately Wawatam disappears alike from Henry's tale and from recorded history. Some fifty years later Henry R. Schoolcraft sought diligently to discover trace of him or of his family, but in vain. H. Bedford-Jones, whose criticisms of Henry's narrative have been noted in our introduction, advances the

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Being now no longer in the society of Indians I laid aside the dress, putting on that of a Canadian; a molton, or blanket coat, over my shirt, and a handkerchief about my head, hats being very little worn in this country.

At daybreak on the second morning of our voyage we embarked, and presently perceived several canoes behind us. As they approached, we ascertained them to be the fleet bound for the Missisaki, of which I had been so long in dread. It amounted to twenty sail.

On coming up with us and surrounding our canoe, and amid general inquiries concerning the news, an Indian challenged me for an Englishman and his companions supported him by declaring that I looked very like one; but I affected not to understand any of the questions which they asked me, and Madame Cadotte assured them that I was a Canadian whom she had brought on his first voyage from Montreal.

The following day saw us safely landed at the Sault, where I experienced a generous welcome from M. Cadotte. There were thirty warriors at this place, restrained from joining in the war only by M. Cadotte's influence.

Here for five days I was once more in possession of tranquillity; but on the sixth a young Indian came into M. Cadotte's saying that a canoe full of warriors had just arrived opinion that Wawatam, like Minavavana, was but a "creation of [Henry's] fancy."—Editor.

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from Michilimackinac; that they had inquired for me; and that he believed their intentions to be bad. Nearly at the same time a message came from the good chief of the village desiring me to conceal myself until he should discover the views and temper of the strangers.

A garret was a second time my place of refuge; and it was not long before the Indians came to M. Cadotte's. My friend immediately informed Mutchikiwish,<sup>67</sup> their chief, who was related to his wife, of the design imputed to them of mischief against myself. Mutchikiwish frankly acknowledged that they had had such a design; but added that if displeasing to M. Cadotte, it should be abandoned. He then further stated that their errand was to raise a party of warriors to return with them to

<sup>67</sup> Mutchikiwish, or Matchekewis, was the chief who had led the braves in the massacre of June 2. In 1866 Chief Alexander Robinson of Chicago gave Lyman Draper this account of Chief Matchekewis: He was a Chippewa, and lived at a place near Mackinac, called Cheboygan. He took Mackinac Fort in Pontiac's War, and when the British reoccupied that post Matchekewis and two or three other ringleaders in that attack were taken, sent to Quebec, and imprisoned awhile. But the British authorities at length released Matchekewis, as well as the others, gave him a medal, flag, and other presents, and he returned home with increased honors. He was with the Indians at the battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794 and signed Wayne's treaty the following year. He was a large, tall chief, and weighed over two hundred pounds; and was a man of great distinction among his people. He died about 1806, quite aged, perhaps about seventy.—*Wis. Hist. Colls.*, VII, 189—90.

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Detroit; and that it had been their intention to take me with them.

In regard to the principal of the two objects thus disclosed, M. Cadotte proceeded to assemble all the chiefs and warriors of the village; and these, after deliberating for some time among themselves, sent for the strangers, to whom both M. Cadotte and the chief of the village addressed a speech. In these speeches, after recurring to the designs confessed to have been entertained against myself, who was now declared to be under the immediate protection of all the chiefs, by whom any insult I might sustain would be avenged, the ambassadors were peremptorily told that they might go back as they came, none of the young men of this village being foolish enough to join them.

A moment after, a report was brought that a canoe had just arrived from Niagara. As this was a place from which everyone was anxious to hear news, a message was sent to these fresh strangers requesting them to come to the council.

The strangers came accordingly, and being seated, a long silence ensued. At length one of them, taking up a belt of wampum, addressed himself thus to the assembly:

“My friends and brothers, I am come, with this belt, from our great father, Sir William Johnson.<sup>68</sup> He desired me to come to you as

<sup>68</sup> Sir William Johnson was a native of Ireland (born 1715) who came to America at an early age. Settling in

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his ambassador, and tell you that he is making a great feast at Fort Niagara; that his kettles are all ready, and his fires lit. He invites you to partake of the feast, in common with your friends, the Six Nations, which have all made peace with the English. He advises you to seize this opportunity of doing the same, as you cannot otherwise fail of being destroyed; for the English are on their march with a great army, which will be joined by different nations of Indians. In a word, before the fall of the leaf they will be at Michilimackinac, and the Six Nations <sup>69</sup> with them."

The tenor of this speech greatly alarmed the Indians of the Sault, who after a very short consultation agreed to send twenty deputies to Sir William Johnson at Niagara. This was a project highly interesting to me, since it offered me the means of leaving the country. I intimated this to the chief of the village, and

the Mohawk Valley, he was adopted by the Iroquois, over whom he acquired great influence, becoming the most noted and successful Indian agent in British America. Johnson played an active and notable part in the Seven Years' War, and in 1761, upon the fall of Montreal, journeyed to Detroit to reconcile the western tribesmen to the British cause. It was from this council that the troops were sent out to garrison Mackinac and the other posts around the Lakes. Johnson died at his home, "Johnson Hall," in 1774.—Editor.

<sup>69</sup> These were the confederated tribes of the Iroquois, ancient and inveterate enemies of the Chippewa.—Editor.

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received his promise that I should accompany the deputation.

Very little time was proposed to be lost in setting forward on the voyage; but the occasion was of too much magnitude not to call for more than human knowledge and discretion; and preparations were accordingly made for solemnly invoking and consulting the Great Turtle.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> The Great Turtle was the chief among the guardian spirits of the Chippewa.—Editor.

## Chapter 21

### INVOKING THE GREAT TURTLE

FOR invoking and consulting the Great Turtle the first thing to be done was the building of a large house or wigwam, within which was placed a species of tent for the use of the priest and reception of the spirit. The tent was formed of moose-skins, hung over a framework of wood. Five poles, or rather pillars, of five different species of timber, about ten feet in height and eight inches in diameter were set in a circle of about four feet in diameter. The holes made to receive them were about two feet deep; and the pillars being set, the holes were filled up again, with the earth which had been dug out. At top the pillars were bound together by a circular hoop, or girder. Over the whole of this edifice were spread the moose-skins, covering it at top and round the sides, and made fast with thongs of the same; except that on one side a part was left unfastened, to admit of the entrance of the priest.

The ceremonies did not commence but with the approach of night. To give light within the house several fires were kindled round the tent. Nearly the whole village assembled in the house, and myself among the rest. It was

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not long before the priest appeared almost in a state of nakedness. As he approached the tent the skins were lifted up as much as was necessary to allow of his creeping under them on his hands and knees. His head was scarcely within side when the edifice, massy as it has been described, began to shake; and the skins were no sooner let fall than the sounds of numerous voices were heard beneath them, some yelling, some barking as dogs, some howling like wolves; and in this horrible concert were mingled screams and sobs, as of despair, anguish, and the sharpest pain. Articulate speech was also uttered, as if from human lips; but in a tongue unknown to any of the audience.

After some time these confused and frightful noises were succeeded by a perfect silence; and now a voice not heard before seemed to manifest the arrival of a new character in the tent. This was a low and feeble voice, resembling the cry of a young puppy. The sound was no sooner distinguished, than all the Indians clapped their hands for joy, exclaiming that this was the Chief Spirit, the Turtle, the spirit that never lied. Other voices which they had discriminated from time to time they had previously hissed, as recognizing them to belong to evil and lying spirits, which deceive mankind.

New sounds came from the tent. During the space of half an hour, a succession of songs



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were heard, in which a diversity of voices met the ear. From his first entrance till these songs were finished we heard nothing in the proper voice of the priest; but now he addressed the multitude, declaring the presence of the Great Turtle and the spirit's readiness to answer such questions as should be proposed.

The questions were to come from the chief of the village, who was silent, however, till after he had put a large quantity of tobacco into the tent, introducing it at the aperture. This was a sacrifice, offered to the spirit; for spirits are supposed by the Indians to be as fond of tobacco as themselves. The tobacco accepted, he desired the priest to inquire whether or not the English were preparing to make war upon the Indians? and whether or not there were at Fort Niagara a large number of English troops?

These questions having been put by the priest, the tent instantly shook; and for some seconds after it continued to rock so violently that I expected to see it levelled with the ground. All this was a prelude, as I supposed, to the answers to be given; but a terrific cry announced, with sufficient intelligibility, the departure of the Turtle.

A quarter of an hour elapsed in silence, and I waited impatiently to discover what was to be the next incident in this scene of imposture. It consisted in the return of the spirit, whose voice was again heard, and who now delivered

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a continued speech. The language of the Great Turtle, like that which we had heard before, was wholly unintelligible to every ear, that of his priest excepted; and it was, therefore, that not till the latter gave us an interpretation, which did not commence before the spirit had finished, that we learned the purport of this extraordinary communication.

The spirit, as we were now informed by the priest, had during his short absence crossed Lake Huron and even proceeded as far as Fort Niagara, which is at the head of Lake Ontario, and thence to Montreal. At Fort Niagara he had seen no great number of soldiers; but on descending the St. Lawrence as low as Montreal, he had found the river covered with boats and the boats filled with soldiers, in number like the leaves of the trees. He had met them on their way up the river, coming to make war upon the Indians.

The chief had a third question to propose, and the spirit, without a fresh journey to Fort Niagara, was able to give it an instant and most favorable answer: "If," said the chief, "the Indians visit Sir William Johnson, will they be received as friends?"

"Sir William Johnson," said the spirit (and after the spirit, the priest) "Sir William Johnson will fill their canoes with presents; with blankets, kettles, guns, gunpowder and shot, and large barrels of rum such as the stoutest of the Indians will not be able to lift;

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and every man will return in safety to his family."

At this the transport was universal; and amid the clapping of hands, a hundred voices exclaimed, "I will go, too! I will go, too!"

The question of public interest being resolved, individuals were now permitted to seize the opportunity of inquiring into the condition of their absent friends, and the fate of such as were sick. I observed that the answers given to these questions allowed of much latitude of interpretation.

Amid this general inquisitiveness I yielded to the solicitations of my own anxiety for the future, and having first, like the rest, made my offering of tobacco, I inquired, whether or not I should ever revisit my native country. The question being put by the priest, the tent shook as usual; after which I received this answer: That I should take courage and fear no danger, for that nothing would happen to hurt me; and that I should in the end reach my friends and country in safety. These assurances wrought so strongly on my gratitude that I presented an additional and extra offering of tobacco.

The Great Turtle continued to be consulted till nearly midnight, when all the crowd dispersed to their respective lodges. I was on the watch through the scene I have described to detect the particular contrivances by which the fraud was carried on; but such was the skill

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displayed in the performance, or such my deficiency of penetration, that I made no discoveries, but came away as I went, with no more than those general surmises which will naturally be entertained by every reader.<sup>71</sup>

On the tenth of June I embarked with the Indian deputation, composed of sixteen men. Twenty had been the number originally designed; and upwards of fifty actually engaged themselves to the council for the undertaking, to say nothing of the general enthusiasm at the moment of hearing the Great Turtle's promises. But exclusively of the degree of timidity which still prevailed, we are to take into account the various domestic calls, which might supersede all others, and detain many with their families.

<sup>71</sup> M. de Champlain has left an account of an exhibition of the nature here described, which may be seen in Charlevoix's *Histoire et Description Generale de la Nouvelle France*, Livre IV. This took place in the year 1609, and was performed among a party of warriors composed of Algonquin, Montagnez, and Hurons. Carver witnessed another among the Cristinaux. In each case the details are somewhat different, but the outline is the same. M. de Champlain mentions that he saw the jongleur shake the stakes or pillars of the tent. I was not so fortunate; but this is the obvious explanation of that part of the mystery to which it refers. Captain Carver leaves the whole in darkness.  
—Author.

## Chapter 22

### VOYAGE TO FORT NIAGARA

**I**N the evening of the second day of our voyage we reached the mouth of the Missisaki, where we found about forty Indians, by whom we were received with abundant kindness, and at night regaled at a great feast, held on account of our arrival. The viand was a preparation of the roe of the sturgeon, beat up and boiled, and of the consistence of porridge.

After eating, several speeches were made to us, of which the general topic was a request that we should recommend the village to Sir William Johnson. This request was also specially addressed to me, and I promised to comply with it.

On the fourteenth of June we passed the village of La Cloche, of which the greater part of the inhabitants were absent, being already on a visit to Sir William Johnson. This circumstance greatly encouraged the companions of my voyage, who now saw that they were not the first to run into danger.

The next day about noon, the wind blowing very hard, we were obliged to put ashore at Point aux Grondines, a place of which some description has been given above.<sup>72</sup> While

<sup>72</sup> See ante, p. 33.—Editor.

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the Indians erected a hut, I employed myself in making a fire. As I was gathering wood, an unusual sound fixed my attention for a moment; but as it presently ceased, and as I saw nothing from which I could suppose it to proceed, I continued my employment, till, advancing farther, I was alarmed by a repetition. I imagined that it came from above my head; but after looking that way in vain, I cast my eyes on the ground and there discovered a rattlesnake, at not more than two feet from my naked legs. The reptile was coiled, and its head raised considerably above its body. Had I advanced another step before my discovery I must have trodden upon it.

I no sooner saw the snake than I hastened to the canoe, in order to procure my gun; but the Indians, observing what I was doing, inquired the occasion, and being informed, begged me to desist. At the same time they followed me to the spot, with their pipes and tobacco-pouches in their hands. On returning, I found the snake still coiled.

The Indians on their part surrounded it, all addressing it by turns, and calling it their grandfather; but yet keeping at some distance. During this part of the ceremony they filled their pipes; and now each blew the smoke toward the snake, who, as it appeared to me, really received it with pleasure. In a word, after remaining coiled and receiving incense for the space of half an hour, it stretched itself

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along the ground in visible good humor. Its length was between four and five feet. Having remained outstretched for some time, at last it moved slowly away, the Indians following it and still addressing it by the title of grandfather, beseeching it to take care of their families during their absence, and to be pleased to open the heart of Sir William Johnson so that he might show them charity and fill their canoe with rum.

One of the chiefs added a petition that the snake would take no notice of the insult which had been offered him by the Englishman, who would even have put him to death but for the interference of the Indians, to whom it was hoped he would impute no part of the offense. They further requested that he would remain and inhabit their country, and not return among the English; that is, go eastward.

After the rattlesnake was gone, I learned that this was the first time that an individual of the species had been seen so far to the northward and westward of the River Des Français, a circumstance, moreover, from which my companions were disposed to infer that this manito had come, or been sent, on purpose to meet them; that his errand had been no other than to stop them on their way; and that consequently it would be most advisable to return to the point of departure. I was so fortunate, however, as to prevail with them to embark,



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and at six o'clock in the evening we again encamped. Very little was spoken of through the evening, the rattlesnake excepted.

Early the next morning we proceeded. We had a serene sky and very little wind, and the Indians, therefore, determined on steering across the lake to an island which just appeared in the horizon; saving, by this course, a distance of thirty miles, which would be lost in keeping the shore. At nine o'clock, A. M., we had a light breeze astern, to enjoy the benefit of which we hoisted sail. Soon after the wind increased and the Indians, beginning to be alarmed, frequently called on the rattlesnake to come to their assistance. By degrees the waves grew high; and at eleven o'clock it blew a hurricane and we expected every moment to be swallowed up. From prayers the Indians now proceeded to sacrifices, both alike offered to the god-rattlesnake, or manito-kinibic. One of the chiefs took a dog, and after tying its fore-legs together threw it overboard, at the same time calling on the snake to preserve us from being drowned, and desiring him to satisfy his hunger with the carcass of the dog. The snake was unpropitious, and the wind increased. Another chief sacrificed another dog, with the addition of some tobacco. In the prayer which accompanied these gifts he besought the snake, as before, not to avenge upon the Indians the insult which he had received from myself, in the conception of a



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design to put him to death. He assured the snake that I was absolutely an Englishman, and of kin neither to him nor to them.

At the conclusion of this speech an Indian, who sat near me, observed that if we were drowned it would be for my fault alone, and that I ought myself to be sacrificed to appease the angry manito; nor was I without apprehensions that in case of extremity this would be my fate; but happily for me the storm at length abated, and we reached the island safely.

The next day was calm and we arrived at the entrance<sup>73</sup> of the navigation which leads to Lake aux Claies.<sup>74</sup> We presently passed two short carrying-places, at each of which were several lodges of Indians,<sup>75</sup> containing only women and children, the men being gone to the council at Niagara. From this, as from a former instance, my companions derived new courage.

On the eighteenth of June we crossed Lake aux Claies, which appeared to be upward of twenty miles in length. At its farther end

<sup>73</sup> This is the Bay of Matchedash, or Matchitashk.—Author.

<sup>74</sup> This lake, which is now called Lake Simcoe, lies between Lakes Huron and Ontario.—Author.

<sup>75</sup> These Indians are called Chippewas, of the particular description called Missisakies; and from their residence at Matchedash, or Matchitashk, also called Matchedash or Matkitashk Indians.—Author.

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we came to the carrying-place of Toranto.<sup>76</sup> Here the Indians obliged me to carry a burden of more than a hundred pounds weight. The day was very hot and the woods and marshes abounded with mosquitoes; but the Indians walked at a quick pace, and I could by no means see myself left behind. The whole country was a thick forest, through which our only road was a footpath, or such as in America is exclusively termed an Indian path.

Next morning at ten o'clock we reached the shore of Lake Ontario. Here we were employed two days in making canoes out of the bark of the elm tree in which we were to transport ourselves to Niagara. For this purpose the Indians first cut down a tree; then stripped off the bark in one entire sheet of about eighteen feet in length, the incision being lengthwise. The canoe was now complete as to its top, bottom, and sides. Its ends were next closed by sewing the bark together; and a few ribs and bars being introduced, the architecture was finished. In this manner we made two canoes, of which one carried eight men and the other nine.

On the twenty-first we embarked at Toranto

<sup>76</sup> Toranto, or Toronto, is the name of a French trading-house on Lake Ontario, built near the site of the present town of York, the capital of the province of Upper Canada.—Author.

"The present town of York" has since become, by a happy transformation, the modern city of Toronto.—Editor.

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and encamped, in the evening, four miles short of Fort Niagara, which the Indians would not approach till morning.

At dawn the Indians were awake, and presently assembled in council, still doubtful as to the fate they were to encounter. I assured them of the most friendly welcome; and at length, after painting themselves with the most lively colors in token of their own peaceable views, and after singing the song which is in use among them on going into danger, they embarked and made for Point Missisaki, which is on the north side of the mouth of the river or strait of Niagara, as the fort is on the south.<sup>77</sup> A few minutes after, I crossed over to the fort; and here I was received by Sir William Johnson in a manner for which I have ever been gratefully attached to his person and memory.

Thus was completed my escape from the sufferings and dangers which the capture of Fort Michilimackinac brought upon me; but the property which I had carried into the Upper Country was left behind. The reader will, therefore, be far from attributing to me any idle or unaccountable motive when he finds me returning to the scene of my misfortune.

<sup>77</sup> The course of the Niagara is almost due north and south. Fort Niagara was on the east side of the river, Point Mississaga on the west.

## Chapter 23

### THE RETURN TO MACKINAC

AT Fort Niagara I found General Bradstreet <sup>78</sup> with a force of three thousand men, preparing to embark for Detroit with a view to raise the siege which it had sustained against Pontiac, for twelve months together. The English in this time had lost many men; and Pontiac had been frequently on the point of carrying the place, though gallantly defended by Major Gladwyn, its commandant.<sup>79</sup>

General Bradstreet, having learned my history, informed me that it was his design, on

<sup>78</sup> Bradstreet was at this time a colonel. A native of England, he had become a colonist by adoption and won distinction at the siege of Louisburg in 1745. His service in the Seven Years' War won for him the rank of colonel, but on the expedition against the western Indians, to which Henry became attached, Bradstreet's conduct was far from notable. He became a general in 1772, and died at Detroit two years later.—Editor.

<sup>79</sup> The classic account of the siege of Detroit is by Francis Parkman in his *Conspiracy of Pontiac*. Henry Gladwin, commander at Detroit, had come to America as a lieutenant in 1755. He was wounded in Braddock's De'eat of that year, and again at Ticonderoga in 1758. He served efficiently throughout the war, and upon the conclusion of Pontiac's War returned (in 1764) to England. In 1782 he became a major-general, dying nine years afterward.—Editor.

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arriving at Detroit, to detach a body of troops to Michilimackinac, and politely assured me of his services in recovering my property there. With these temptations before me I was easily induced to follow the General to Detroit.

But I was not to go as a mere looker-on. On the contrary, I was invested with the honor of a command in a corps, of the exploits, however, of which I can give no flattering account.

Besides the sixteen Saulteurs, or Chippewa, of the Sault de Ste. Marie, with whom I had come to Fort Niagara, there were already at that place eighty Matchedash Indians, the same whose lodges we passed at the carrying-places of Lake aux Claies. These ninety-six men being formed into what was called the Indian Battalion, were furnished with necessities, and I was appointed to be their leader—me, whose best hope it had very lately been to live through their forbearance.

On the tenth of July the army marched for Fort Schlausser,<sup>80</sup> a stockaded post above the Great Falls, and I ordered my Indians to march also. Only ten of the whole number were ready at the call, but the rest promised to follow the next morning. With my skeleton battalion, therefore, I proceeded to the fort, and there waited the whole of the next day, impatiently

<sup>80</sup> Fort Schlosser was built by the British in 1759 at the upper end of the portage around Niagara Falls. Near here, on September 13, 1763, occurred the massacre of Devil's Hole.—Editor.

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expecting the remainder. I waited in vain; and the day following returned to Fort Niagara, when I found that they had all deserted, going back to their homes, equipment and all, by the way of Toranto. I thought their conduct, though dishonest, not very extraordinary; since the Indians employed in the siege of Detroit, against whom we were leading them, were at peace with their nation, and their own friends and kinsmen. Amid the general desertion four Missisakies joined the ten whom I had left at Fort Schlausser.

For the transport of the army on Lake Erie barges had been expressly built, capable of carrying a hundred men each, with their provisions. One of these was allowed to me and my Indians.

On the fourteenth we embarked at Fort Schlausser, and in the evening encamped at Fort Erie. Here the Indians, growing drunk, amused themselves with a disorderly firing of their muskets in the camp. On this, General Bradstreet ordered all the rum in the Indian quarters to be seized and thrown away. The Indians, in consequence, threatened to desert; and the general, judging it proper to assume a high tone, immediately assembled the chiefs (for among the fourteen Indians there were more chiefs than one) and told them that he had no further occasion for their services, and that such of them as should follow his camp would be considered as soldiers, and subjected to

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military discipline accordingly. After hearing the General's speech, the majority set out for Fort Niagara the same evening, and thence returned to their own country by the way of Toronto; and thus was my poor battalion still further diminished!

On our fifth day from Fort Schlausser we reached Presqu'isle,<sup>81</sup> where we dragged our barges over the neck of land, but not without straining their timbers; and with more loss of time, as I believe, than if we had rowed round. On the twentieth day we were off the mouth of the river which falls into Sandusky Bay, where a council of war was held on the question whether it were more advisable to attack and destroy the Indian villages on the Miami or to proceed for Detroit direct. Early the next morning, it having been determined that, considering the villages were populous as well as hostile, it was necessary to destroy them, we entered the Miami; but were presently met by a deputation offering peace. The offer was accepted; but it was not till after two days, during which we had begun to be doubtful of the enemy's intention, that the chiefs arrived.

When they came, a sort of armistice was

<sup>81</sup> Modern Erie, Pennsylvania. The French had had a post here which was abandoned and burned after the fall of Montreal in 1760. in advance of the coming of the English. The latter arrived on July 17, and proceeded to rebuild the fort.—Editor.



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agreed upon;<sup>82</sup> and they promised to meet the General at Detroit within fifteen days. At that place terms of peace were to be settled in a general council. On the eighth of August we landed at Detroit.<sup>83</sup>

The Indians of the Miami were punctual, and a general peace was concluded. Pontiac, who could do nothing against the force which was now opposed to him and who saw himself abandoned by his followers, unwilling to trust his fortunes with the English, fled to the Illinois.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>82</sup> This occurred at Presque Isle, rather than Sandusky. Bradstreet's highly injudicious procedure in this connection was promptly disavowed by his superior officers. "They have negotiated with you on Lake Erie, and cut our throats upon the frontiers," wrote General Gage to Bradstreet on October 15, and in this and other communications he spoke bitterly of Bradstreet's conduct.—Editor.

<sup>83</sup> Bradstreet's army reached Detroit on August 26.—Editor.

<sup>84</sup> It is very possible, nevertheless, that Pontiac subsequently joined the English, and that a portion of what is related by Carver concerning his latter history and death is true. It cannot, however, be intended to insinuate that an English governor was party to the assassination:

"Pontiac henceforward seemed to have laid aside the animosity he had hitherto borne towards the English, and apparently became their zealous friend. To reward this new attachment, and to insure a continuance of it, government allowed him a handsome pension. But his restless and intriguing spirit would not suffer him to be grateful for this allowance, and his conduct at length grew suspicious; so that going, in the year



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On the day following that of the treaty of peace, Captain Howard was detached, with two companies and three hundred Canadian volunteers, for Fort Michilimackinac;<sup>85</sup> and I embarked at the same time.

1767, to hold a council in the country of the Illinois, a faithful Indian, who was either commissioned by one of the English governors, or instigated by the love he bore the English nation, attended him as a spy; and being convinced from the speech of Pontiac made in the council, that he still retained his former prejudices against those for whom he now professed a friendship, he plunged his knife into his heart, as soon as he had done speaking, and laid him dead on the spot."—Author.

Pontiac relapsed into obscurity following the unsuccessful ending of the war against the English which he had originated and led. In 1769, while paying a visit to St. Louis, he crossed the river to Cahokia and was there slain by a Kaskaskia Indian who was bribed thereto by an English trader for the present of a barrel of rum. His body was carried across the river to St. Louis and there buried. "For a mausoleum," says Parkman, "a city has arisen above the forest hero; and the race whom he hated with such burning rancor trample with unceasing footsteps over his forgotten grave."—Editor.

<sup>85</sup> The figures have been transposed by Henry; Captain Howard had 300 English troops and two companies of Canadians of fifty men each. In 1775 Governor Hamilton of Detroit reported to General Guy Carleton that he had been informed "by a person of character here" that Colonel Bradstreet had promised to pay the Canadians who went with Captain Howard half a dollar per day, which was never given them, "tho they had neglected their harvest and returned half naked. Such a precedent," continued Hamilton, "must be of the worst consequence and I

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From Detroit to the mouth of Lake Huron is called a distance of eighty miles. From the fort to Lake St. Claire, which is only seven miles, the lands are cultivated on both sides of the strait, and appeared to be laid out in very comfortable farms. In the strait, on the right hand is a village of Huron, and at the mouth of Lake St. Claire a village of Ottawa. We met not a single Indian on our voyage, the report of the arrival of the English army having driven every one from the shores of the lake.

On our arrival at Michilimackinac the Ottawa of L'Arbre Croche were sent for to the fort. They obeyed the summons, bringing with them some Chippewa chiefs, and peace was concluded with both.

For myself, having much property due to me at Ste. Marie's, I resolved on spending the winter at that place. I was in part successful; and in the spring I returned to Michilimackinac.

The pause which I shall here make in my narrative might with some propriety have been placed at the conclusion of the preceding chapter; but it is here that my first series of adventures are brought truly to an end. What remains belongs to a second enterprise, wholly independent of the preceding.

mention the fact to your Excellency as it has left a deep impression upon those who were sufferers from such a dishonorable breach of word and credit." R. G. Thwaites and L. P. Kellogg *Revolution on the Upper Ohio* (Madison, 1908), 133-34.—Editor.

PART TWO

LAKE SUPERIOR AND THE CANADIAN  
NORTHWEST, 1765-76



## Chapter 1

### JOURNEY TO CHEQUAMEGON

UNDER the French government of Canada the fur trade was subject to a variety of regulations, established and enforced by the royal authority; and in 1765, the period at which I began to prosecute it anew, some remains of the ancient system were still preserved. No person could go into the countries lying north-westward of Detroit unless furnished with a license; and the exclusive trade of particular districts was capable of being enjoyed in virtue of grants from military commanders.

The exclusive trade of Lake Superior was given to myself by the commandant of Fort Michilimackinac; and to prosecute it I purchased goods, which I found at this post, at twelve months' credit. My stock was the freight of four canoes, and I took it at the price of ten thousand pounds weight of good and merchantable beaver. It is in beaver that accounts are kept at Michilimackinac; but in defect of this article, other furs and skins are accepted in payments, being first reduced unto their value in beaver. Beaver was at this time at the price of two shillings and six pence per pound, Michilimackinac currency; otter skins,

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at six shillings each; marten, at one shilling and six pence, and others in proportion.

To carry the goods to my wintering ground in Lake Superior, I engaged twelve men at two hundred and fifty livres, of the same currency, each; that is, a hundred pounds weight of beaver. For provisions, I purchased fifty bushels of maize at ten pounds of beaver per bushel. At this place specie was so wholly out of the question that in going to a cantine,<sup>1</sup> you took with you a marten's skin, to pay your reckoning.<sup>2</sup>

On the fourteenth of July, 1765 I embarked for the Sault de Ste. Marie, where, on my arrival, I took into partnership M. Cadotte, whom I have already had frequent occasion to name; and on the 26th I proceeded for my wintering ground, which was to be fixed at Chagouemig.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The post canteen.—Editor.

<sup>2</sup> See Part One, chapter v.—Author.

<sup>3</sup> Modern Chequamegon Bay, near whose head stands the city of Ashland, Wisconsin. In this vicinity is one of the oldest centers of French activity in the interior of the continent. Here two daring traders, Groseilliers and Radisson, established headquarters two decades before William Penn founded the City of Brotherly Love. Here for four years, beginning in October, 1665, Father Allouez labored unavailingly to soften the hearts of the contumacious red men. From here Father Marquette followed the Ottawa and Huron bands, fleeing eastward before the avenging Sioux, to establish at the Straits of Mackinac the mission of St. Ignace. Following Radisson and Groseilliers came a long succession of traders whose names have now become commonplaces

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The next morning I crossed the Strait of Ste. Marie, or of Lake Superior, to a point which the Chippewa call the Grave of the Iroquois.<sup>4</sup> To this name there belongs a tradition that the Iroquois, who at a certain time made war upon the Chippewa, with the design of dispossessing them of their country, encamped one night a thousand strong upon this point; where, thinking themselves secure from their numbers, they indulged in feasting on the bodies of their prisoners. The sight, however, of the sufferings and humiliation of their kindred and friends so wrought upon the Chippewa, who beheld them from the opposite shore, that with the largest number of warriors they could collect, but which amounted only to three hundred, they crossed the channel and at break of day fell upon the Iroquois, now sleeping after their excesses, and put one and all to death. Of their own party, they lost but a single man; and he died of a

in the history of the Northwest—Duluth, Le Sueur, La Ronde, Henry, the Cadottes, the Warren brothers, and others. For the early history of the place see Thwaites, "Story of Chequamegon Bay" in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIII, 397-425.—Editor.

<sup>4</sup> Iroquois Point is in modern Chippewa County, Michigan. Nearby is the village of Iroquois. The tragedy which gave their names to point and village occurred in 1662. A detailed narrative of the affair by Perrot is in Emma H. Blair's *Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes* (Cleveland, 1911), I, 178-80.—Editor.

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wound which he received from an old woman, who stabbed him with an awl. She was at work, making shoes for the family, when he broke into the lodge, near the entrance of which she sat. Some of the old men of my crew remembered at this place to have seen bones.

On the lake we fell in with Indians, of whom I purchased provisions. One party agreed to accompany me, to hunt for me, on condition of being supplied with necessaries on credit.

On the nineteenth of August we reached the mouth of the river Ontonagan, one of the largest on the south side of the lake. At the mouth was an Indian village; and at three leagues above, a fall, at the foot of which sturgeon were at this season so abundant that a month's subsistence for a regiment could have been taken in a few hours.

But I found this river chiefly remarkable for the abundance of virgin copper which is on its banks and in its neighborhood, and of which the reputation is at present more generally spread than it was at the time of this my first visit. The attempts which were shortly after made to work the mines of Lake Superior to advantage will very soon claim a place among the facts which I am to describe.

The copper presented itself to the eye in masses of various weight. The Indians showed me one of twenty pounds. They were used to manufacture this metal into spoons and bracelets for themselves. In the perfect state in



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which they found it, it required nothing but to be beat into shape. The Pi-wa-tic, or Iron River,<sup>5</sup> enters the lake to the westward of the Ontonagan; and here, as is pretended, silver was found while the country was in the possession of the French.

Beyond this river I met more Indians, whom I furnished with merchandise on credit. The prices were, for a stroud blanket, ten beaver-skins; for a white blanket, eight; a pound of powder, two; a pound of shot, or of ball, one; a gun, twenty; an axe of one pound weight, two; a knife, one. Beaver, it will be remembered, was worth at Michilimackinac two shillings and sixpence a pound, in the currency of that place; that is, six livres, or a dollar.

On my arrival at Chagouemig I found fifty lodges of Indians there. These people were almost naked, their trade having been interrupted, first by the English invasion of Canada and next by Pontiac's War.

Adding the Indians of Chagouemig to those which I had brought with me, I had now a hundred families, to all of whom I was required to advance goods on credit. At a council which I was invited to attend, the men declared that unless their demands were complied with their wives and children would perish; for that there were neither ammunition nor

<sup>5</sup> Modern Iron River, in Ontonagon County, Michigan.—Editor.

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clothing left among them. Under these circumstances I saw myself obliged to distribute goods to the amount of three thousand beaver-skins. This done, the Indians went on their hunt, at the distance of a hundred leagues. A clerk, acting as my agent, accompanied them to Fond du Lac,<sup>6</sup> taking with him two loaded canoes. Meanwhile, at the expense of six days' labor I was provided with a very comfortable house for my winter's residence.

<sup>6</sup> At or near the site of modern Superior, Wisconsin.—  
Editor.

## Chapter 2

### THE WINTER AT CHEQUAMEGON

**C**HAGOUEMIG, or Chagouemigon, might at this period be regarded as the metropolis of the Chippewa, of whom the true name is O'chibbuoy. The chiefs informed me that they had frequently attacked the Nadowessies (by the French called Sioux or Nadouessioux) with whom they are always at war, with fifteen hundred men including in this number the fighting men from Fond du Lac, or the head of Lake Superior. The cause of the perpetual war carried on between these two nations, is this, that both claim as their exclusive hunting ground the tract of country which lies between them, and uniformly attack each other when they meet upon it.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> This immemorial warfare between the Chippewa and the Sioux was continued until almost our own day. In August, 1919, there died at Beaulieu, Minnesota, a Chippewa chief (Mayzhuckegeshig) who in earlier life had repeatedly led his braves to battle against the Sioux. When a warrior distinguished himself in battle by killing and scalping his foeman he was usually decorated with a feather from a war eagle. Some indication alike of the prowess and of the manner of life of Mayzhuckegeshig in his earlier years is afforded by the fact that he had accumulated some twenty of these prized trophies. In 1825 Governor Cass met the Sioux and the Chippewa in council at Prairie du Chien,

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The Chippewa of Chagouemig are a handsome, well-made people; and much more cleanly, as well as much more regular in the government of their families, than the Chippewa of Lake Huron. The women have agreeable features and take great pains in dressing their hair, which consists in neatly dividing it on the forehead and top of the head and in plaiting and turning it up behind. The men paint as well their whole body as their face; sometimes with charcoal, and sometimes with white ocher; and appear to study how to make themselves as unlike as possible to anything human. The clothing in which I found them, both men and women, was chiefly of dressed deer-skin, European manufactures having been for some time out of their reach. In this respect, it was not long after my goods were dispersed among them before they were scarcely to be known for the same people. The women heightened the color of their cheeks, and

Wisconsin, in an effort to arrange their boundary disputes and thus end the interminable warfare between the two tribes. When he asked the Sioux chiefs on what ground they claimed the territory in dispute they answered, "by possession and occupation from our forefathers." Turning to the Chippewa, Cass put the same question, to which the noted Hole-in-the-Day, rising with a graceful gesture, replied: "My Father, we claim it on the same ground that you claim this country from the British king—by conquest. We drove them from the country by force of arms, and have since occupied it; and they dare not try to dispossess us of our habitations."—Editor.

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really animated their beauty, by a liberal use of vermilion.

My house being completed, my winter's food was the next object; and for this purpose, with the assistance of my men, I soon took two thousand trout and whitefish, the former frequently weighing fifty pounds each and the latter commonly from four to six. We preserved them by suspending them by the tail in the open air. These, without bread or salt, were our food through all the winter, the men being free to consume what quantity they pleased and boiling or roasting them whenever they thought proper. After leaving Michilimackinac I saw no bread; and I found less difficulty in reconciling myself to the privation than I could have anticipated.

On the fifteenth of December the Bay of Chagouemig was frozen entirely over. After this I resumed my former amusement of spearing trout, and sometimes caught a hundred of these fish in a day, each weighing on an average twenty pounds.

My house, which stood in the bay, was sheltered by an island of fifteen miles in length,<sup>8</sup> and between which and the main the channel is four miles broad. On the island there was formerly a French trading-post, much frequented; and in its neighborhood a large Indian village. To the south-east is a lake, called Lake des Outaouais, from the Ottawa.

<sup>8</sup> Modern Madelaine Island.—Editor.

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its former possessors<sup>9</sup>; but it is now the property of the Chippewa.

From the first hunting party which brought me furs I experienced some disorderly behavior; but happily without serious issue. Having crowded into my house and demanded rum, which I refused them, they talked of indulging themselves in a general pillage, and I found myself abandoned by all my men. Fortunately I was able to arm myself; and on my threatening to shoot the first who should lay his hands on anything, the tumult began to subside and was presently after at an end. When over, my men appeared to be truly ashamed of their cowardice, and made promises never to behave in a similar manner again.

Admonished of my danger, I now resolved on burying the liquor which I had; and the Indians, once persuaded that I had none to

<sup>9</sup> Lac Court Oreilles in Sawyer County, Wisconsin, about eighty miles southwest of Henry's wintering place. Hither the Ottawa fled in the seventeenth century, seeking refuge from the destroying Iroquois. Although they remained for but a brief period they returned to the place on subsequent hunting expeditions. The Ottawa acquired the sobriquet of Court Oreilles (short ears) not because they practiced clipping these organs but because unlike certain other tribes who distended the lobe by ornaments or weights, they left their ears in their natural condition. The Ottawa have long since disappeared from the vicinity of Lac Court Oreilles, where there is today an Indian reservation inhabited by several hundred Chippewa.—Editor.

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give them, went and came very peaceably, paying their debts and purchasing goods. In the month of March the manufacture of maple sugar engaged, as usual, their attention.

While the snow still lay on the ground, I proposed to the Indians to join me in a hunting excursion, and they readily agreed. Shortly after we went out my companions discovered dents or hollows in the snow, which they affirmed to be the footsteps of a bear, made in the beginning of the winter, after the first snow. As for me, I should have passed over the same ground without acquiring any such information; and probably without remarking the very faint traces which they were able to distinguish, and certainly without deducting so many particular facts: but what can be more credible than that long habits of close observation in the forest should give the Indian hunter some advantages in the exercise of his daily calling? The Indians were not deceived; for on following the traces which they had found they were led to a tree at the root of which was a bear.

As I had proposed this hunt, I was by the Indian custom the master and the proprietor of all the game; but the head of the family which composed my party begged to have the bear, alleging that he much desired to make a feast to the Kichi Manito, or Great Spirit, who had preserved himself and his family through the winter and brought them in safety to the

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lake. On his receiving my consent, the women went to the spot where we had killed the bear and where the carcass had been left in safety, buried deep in the snow. They brought the booty back with them, and kettles being hung over the fires, the whole bear was dressed for the feast.

About an hour after dark accompanied by four of my men I repaired to the place of sacrifice, according to invitation. The number of the Indians exactly equalled ours, there being two men and three women; so that together we were ten persons, upon whom it was incumbent to eat up the whole bear. I was obliged to receive into my own plate, or dish, a portion of not less than ten pounds weight, and each of my men were supplied with twice this quantity. As to the Indians, one of them had to his share the head, the breast, the heart, with its surrounding fat, and all the four feet; and the whole of this he swallowed in two hours. He, as well as the rest, had finished before I had got through half my toil; and my men were equally behindhand. In this situation one of them resorted to an experiment which had a ludicrous issue, and which at the same time served to discover a fresh feature in the superstitions of the Indians. Having first observed to us that a part of the cheer would be very acceptable to him the next day, when his appetite should be returned, he withdrew a part of the contents of his dish and



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made it fast to the girdle which he wore under his shirt. While he disposed in this manner of his superabundance I, who found myself unable to perform my part, requested the Indians to assist me; and this they cheerfully did, eating what I had found too much with as much apparent ease as if their stomachs had been previously empty. The feast being brought to an end, and the prayer and thanksgiving pronounced, those near the door departed; but when the poor fellow who had concealed his meat, and who had to pass from the farther end of the lodge, rose up to go, two dogs, guided by the scent, laid hold of the treasure and tore it to the ground. The Indians were greatly astonished; but presently observed that the Great Spirit had led the dogs by inspiration to the act in order to frustrate the profane attempt to steal away this portion of the offering. As matters stood the course they took was to put the meat into the fire and there consume it.

On the twentieth of April the ice broke up, and several canoes arrived filled with women and children who reported that the men of their band were all gone out to war against the Nadowessies. On the fifteenth of May a part of the warriors, with some others, arrived in fifty canoes, almost every one of which had a cargo of furs. The warriors gave me some account of their campaign, stating that they had set out in search of the enemy four

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hundred strong and that on the fourth day from their leaving their village they had met the enemy and been engaged in battle. The battle, as they related, raged the greater part of the day and in the evening the Nadowessies to the number of six hundred fell back across a river which lay behind them, encamping in this position for the night. The Chippewa had thirty-five killed and they took advantage of the suspension of the fray to prepare the bodies of their friends, and then retired to a small distance from the place expecting the Nadowessies to recross the stream in the morning and come again to blows. In this, however, they were disappointed; for the Nadowessies continued their retreat without even doing the honors of war to the slain. To do these honors is to scalp, and to prepare the bodies is to dress and paint the remains of the dead, preparatorily to this mark of attention from the enemy: "The neglect," said the Chippewa, "was an affront to us—a disgrace; because we consider it an honor to have the scalps of our countrymen exhibited in the villages of our enemies in testimony of our valor."

The concourse of Indians already mentioned, with others who came after, all rich in furs, enabled me very speedily to close my traffic for the spring, disposing of all the goods which on taking M. Cadotte into partnership had been left in my own hands. I found myself in possession of a hundred and fifty packs of beaver

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weighing a hundred pounds each, besides twenty-five packs of otter and marten skins; and with this part of the fruits of my adventure I embarked for Michilimackinac, sailing in company with fifty canoes of Indians who had still a hundred packs of beaver which I was unable to purchase.

On my way I encamped a second time at the mouth of the Ontonagan and now took the opportunity of going ten miles up the river with Indian guides. The object which I went most expressly to see, and to which I had the satisfaction of being led, was a mass of copper of the weight, according to my estimate, of no less than five tons. Such was its pure and malleable state, that with an axe I was able to cut off a portion weighing a hundred pounds.<sup>10</sup> On viewing the surrounding surface I conjectured that the mass at some period or other had rolled from the side of a lofty hill which rises at its back.

<sup>10</sup> This mass of copper, later known as Copper Rock, was known to explorers from a very early period. At the time of the boom in the Copper Country in the early 'forties, possession was taken of Copper Rock by some miners from the lead-mines of southern Wisconsin. It was later removed to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington.—Editor.

## Chapter 3

### FAMINE AT THE SAULT

I PASSED the winter following at the Sault de Ste. Marie. Fish, at this place, are usually so abundant in the autumn that precautions are not taken for a supply of provisions for the winter; but this year the fishery failed, and the early setting-in of the frost rendered it impracticable to obtain assistance from Michilimackinac. To the increase of our difficulties, five men, whom, on the prospect of distress, I had sent to subsist themselves at a distant post, came back on the day before Christmas, driven in by want.

Under these circumstances, and having heard that fish might be found in Oak Bay, called by the French, *Anse à la Pêche*, or Fishing Cove,<sup>11</sup> which is on the north side of Lake Superior, at the distance of twelve leagues from the Sault, I lost no time in repairing thither, taking with me several men, with a pint of maize only for each person.

In Oak Bay we were generally able to obtain a supply of food, sometimes doing so with great facility, but at others going to bed hungry.

<sup>11</sup> "*Anse à la Pêche*" is shown on Bellin's map of Canada of 1745 as the indentation on the east side of modern Whitefish Bay into which the Goulais River empties.—Editor.

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After being here a fortnight, we were joined by a body of Indians, flying, like ourselves, from famine. Two days after, there came a young Indian out of the woods alone, and reporting that he had left the family to which he belonged behind in a starving condition and unable, from their weakly and exhausted state, to pursue their journey to the bay. The appearance of this youth was frightful; and from his squalid figure there issued a stench which none of us could support.

His arrival struck our camp with horror and uneasiness; and it was not long before the Indians came to me, saying, that they suspected he had been eating human flesh, and even that he had killed and devoured the family which he pretended to have left behind.

These charges, upon being questioned, he denied; but not without so much equivocation in his answers as to increase the presumption against him. In consequence, the Indians determined on traveling a day's journey on his track; observing that they should be able to discover from his encampments whether he were guilty or not. The next day they returned, bringing with them a human hand and skull. The hand had been left roasting before a fire, while the intestines, taken out of the body from which it was cut, hung fresh on a neighboring tree.

The youth, being informed of these discoveries, and further questioned, confessed the

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crime of which he was accused. From the account he now proceeded to give it appeared that the family had consisted of his uncle and aunt, their four children, and himself. One of the children was a boy of fifteen years of age. His uncle, after firing at several beasts of the chase, all of which he missed, fell into despondence, and persuaded himself that it was the will of the Great Spirit that he should perish. In this state of mind, he requested his wife to kill him. The woman refused to comply; but the two lads, one of them, as has been said, the nephew, and the other the son of the unhappy man, agreed between themselves to murder him, to prevent, as our informant wished us to believe, his murdering them. Accomplishing their detestable purpose, they devoured the body; and famine pressing upon them still closer, they successively killed the three younger children, upon whose flesh they subsisted for some time, and with a part of which the parricides at length set out for the lake, leaving the woman, who was too feeble to travel, to her fate. On their way, their foul victuals failed; the youth before us killed his companion; and it was a part of the remains of this last victim that had been discovered at the fire.

The Indians entertain an opinion that the man who has once made human flesh his food will never afterward be satisfied with any other. It is probable that we saw things in

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some measure through the medium of our prejudices; but I confess that this distressing object appeared to verify the doctrine. He ate with relish nothing that was given him; but, indifferent to the food prepared, fixed his eyes continually on the children which were in the Indian lodge, and frequently exclaimed, "How fat they are!" It was perhaps not unnatural that after long acquaintance with no human form but such as was gaunt and pale from want of food, a man's eyes should be almost riveted upon anything where misery had not made such inroads, and still more upon the bloom and plumpness of childhood; and the exclamation might be the most innocent, and might proceed from an involuntary and unconquerable sentiment of admiration. Be this as it may, his behavior was considered, and not less naturally, as marked with the most alarming symptoms; and the Indians, apprehensive that he would prey upon their children, resolved on putting him to death. They did this the next day with the single stroke of an axe, aimed at his head from behind, and of the approach of which he had not the smallest intimation.

Soon after this affair our supply of fish, even here, began to fail; and we resolved, in consequence, to return to the Sault, in the hope that some supply might have arrived there. Want, however, still prevailed at that place, and no stranger had visited it; we set off, therefore, to Michilimackinac, taking with us only one

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meal's provision for each person. Happily, at our first encampment an hour's fishing procured us seven trout, each from ten pounds weight to twenty. At the River Miscoutinsaki we found two lodges of Indians who had fish, and who generously gave us part. The next day we continued our journey till, meeting with a caribou, I was so fortunate as to kill it. We encamped close to the carcass, which weighed about four hundred pounds, and subsisted ourselves upon it for two days. On the seventh day of our march we reached Fort Michilimackinac, where our difficulties ended.

On the first of July there arrived a hundred canoes from the Northwest, laden with beaver.



## Chapter 4

### LEGENDS OF NANIBOJOU

THE same year I chose my wintering ground at Michipicoten on the north side of Lake Superior, distant fifty leagues from the Sault de Ste. Marie. On my voyage, after passing the great capes which are at the mouth of the lake, I observed the banks to be low and stony and in some places running a league back to the feet of a ridge of mountains.

At Point Mamance the beach appeared to abound in mineral substances and I met with a vein of lead ore, where the metal abounded in the form of cubical crystals. Still coasting along the lake, I found several veins of copper ore of that kind which the miners call gray ore.

From Mamance to Nanibojou is fifteen leagues. Nanibojou is on the eastern side of the Bay of Michipicoten. At the opposite point, or cape, are several small islands, under one of which, according to Indian tradition, is buried Nanibojou, a person of the most sacred memory. Nanibojou is otherwise called by the names of Minabojou, Michabou, Mes-sou, Shactac, and a variety of others, but of all of which the interpretation appears to be the *Great Hare*. The traditions related of the

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Great Hare are as varied as his name.<sup>12</sup> He was represented to me as the founder, and indeed the creator, of the Indian nations of North America. He lived originally toward the going-down of the sun where, being warned in a dream that the inhabitants would be drowned by a general flood produced by heavy rains, he built a raft, on which he afterwards preserved his own family and all the animal world without exception. According to his dream, the rains fell and a flood ensued. His raft drifted for many moons during which no land was discovered. His family began to despair of a termination to the calamity, and the animals, who had then the use of speech, murmured loudly against him. In the end he produced a new earth, placed the animals upon it, and created man.

At a subsequent period he took from the animals the use of speech. This act of severity was performed in consequence of a conspiracy into which they had entered against the human race. At the head of the conspiracy was the bear; and the great increase which had taken place among the animals rendered their numbers formidable. I have heard many other

<sup>12</sup> The legends of Nanibojou, dealing with the myth of the creation, are preserved among many and widely scattered tribes. In 1804 Captain Thomas G. Anderson found at the site of modern Two Rivers, Wisconsin, an Indian chief named Nannabojou. His account of the origin and significance of his name is recorded in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, IX, 155-57.—Editor.

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stories concerning Nanibojou, and many have been already given to the public; and this at least is certain, that sacrifices are offered on the island which is called his grave or tumulus, by all who pass it. I landed there and found on the projecting rocks a quantity of tobacco rotting in the rain, together with kettles, broken guns, and a variety of other articles. His spirit is supposed to make this its constant residence; and here to preside over the lake, and over the Indians, in their navigation and fishing.

This island lies no farther from the main than the distance of five hundred yards. On the opposite beach I found several pieces of virgin copper, of which many were remarkable for their form, some resembling leaves of vegetables and others, animals. Their weight was from an ounce to three pounds.

From the island to my proposed wintering ground the voyage was about ten leagues. The lake is here bordered by a rugged and elevated country, consisting in mountains of which for the most part the feet are in the water and the heads in the clouds. The river which falls into the bay is a large one but has a bar at its entrance over which there is no more than four feet water.

On reaching the trading post, which was an old one of French establishment, I found ten lodges of Indians. These were Gens de Terres, or O'pimittish Ininiwac, of which

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nation I have already had occasion to speak.<sup>13</sup> It is scattered over all the country between the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Lake Arabuthcow,<sup>14</sup> and between Lake Superior and Hudson's Bay. Its language is a mixture of those of its neighbors, the Chippewa and Christinaux.<sup>15</sup> The men and women wear their hair in the same fashion, and are otherwise so much dressed alike that it is often difficult to distinguish their sexes. Their lodges, on the insufficiency of which I have before remarked, have no covering except the branches of the spruce fir and these habitations, as well as the clothes and persons of the inhabitants, are full of dirt and vermin. Such is the inhospitality of the country over which they wander that only a single family can live together in the winter season, and this sometimes seeks subsistence in vain on an area of five hundred square miles. They can stay in one place only till they have destroyed all its hares, and when these fail they have no resource but in the leaves and shoots of trees, or in defect of these in cannibalism. Most of these particulars, however,

<sup>13</sup> See Part One, chapter 6. They are also called *Têtes de Boule*.—Author.

The descendants of the *Têtes de Boule* (round-heads) now dwell in the province of Quebec. Alone of all the tribes of eastern Canada, they still refuse to devote themselves to agriculture.—Editor.

<sup>14</sup> Modern Lake Athabasca.—Editor.

<sup>15</sup> The same with Kristinaux, Killistinoes, Criqs, Cris, Crees, etc., etc., etc.—Author.

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are to be regarded as strong traits by which the sorrows and calamities of the country admit of being characterized, rather than as parts of an accurate delineation of its more ordinary state.

Among such of these Indians as I knew, one of them was married to his own daughter, who had brought him several children; and I was told by his companions that it was common among them for a man to have at the same time both a mother and her daughter for wives.

To the ten lodges I advanced goods to a large amount, allowing every man credit for a hundred beaver-skins, and every woman for thirty. In this I went beyond what I had done for the Chippewa, a proceeding to which I was emboldened by the high character for honesty which is supported by this otherwise abject people. Within a few days after their departure, others arrived; and by the fifteenth of October I had seen, or so I was informed, all the Indians of this quarter, and which belong to a thousand square miles. They were comprised in no more than eighteen families; and even these, in summer, could not find food in the country were it not for the fish in the streams and lakes.

The country immediately contiguous to my wintering ground was mountainous in every direction, and the mountains were separated from each other rather by lakes than valleys,

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the quantity of water everywhere exceeding that of the land. On the summits of some of the mountains there were sugar-maple trees; but with these exceptions, the uplands had no other growth than spruce-firs and pines, nor the lowlands than birch and poplar. Occasionally, I saw a few cariboux, and hares and partridges supplied my Sunday dinners. By Christmas day the lake was covered with ice.

## Chapter 5

### A TEMPESTUOUS VOYAGE

**I**N the beginning of April I prepared to make maple sugar, building for this purpose a house in a hollow dug out of the snow. The house was seven feet high but yet was lower than the snow.

On the twenty-fourth I began my manufacture. On the twenty-eighth the lands below were covered with a thick fog. All was calm, and from the top of the mountain not a cloud was to be discovered in the horizon. Descending the next day, I found half a foot of new-fallen snow and learned that it had blown hard in the valleys the day before; so that I perceived I had been making sugar in a region above the clouds.

Sugar-making continued till the twelfth of May. On the mountain we eat nothing but our sugar during the whole period. Each man consumed a pound a day, desired no other food, and was visibly nourished by it.

After returning to the banks of the river, wild fowl appeared in such abundance that a day's subsistence for fifty men could without difficulty be shot daily by one; but all this was the affair of less than a week, before the end of which the water which had been covered was

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left naked, and the birds had fled away to the northward.

On the twentieth day of the month the first party of Indians came in from their winter's hunt. During the season some of them had visited one of the factories of the Hudson's Bay Company. Within a few days following I had the satisfaction of seeing all those to whom I had advanced goods return. Out of two thousand skins, which was the amount of my outstanding debts, not thirty remained unpaid; and even the trivial loss which I did suffer was occasioned by the death of one of the Indians, for whom his family brought, as they said, all the skins of which he died possessed, and offered to pay the rest from among themselves; his manes, they observed, would not be able to enjoy peace, while his name remained in my books and his debts were left unsatisfied.

In the spring, at Michilimackinac, I met with a Mr. Alexander Baxter, recently arrived from England on report of the ores existing in this country. To this gentleman, I communicated my mineralogical observations and specimens, collected both on my voyages and at my wintering ground; and I was thus introduced into a partnership which was soon afterward formed for working the mines of Lake Superior.

Meanwhile, I prepared to pass a second winter at Michipicoten, which I reached at the



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usual season. In the month of October, all the Indians being supplied and at the chase, I resolved on indulging myself in a voyage to the Sault de Ste. Marie, and took with me three Canadians and a young Indian woman, who wished to see her relations there. As the distance was short and we were to fish by the way, we took no other provision than a quart of maize for each person.

On the first night we encamped on the island of Nanibojou and set our net. We certainly neglected the customary offerings, and an Indian would not fail to attribute it to this cause that in the night there arose a violent storm which continued for three days, in which it was impossible for us to visit our net. In consequence we subsisted ourselves on our maize, the whole of which we nearly finished. On the evening of the third day the storm abated and we hastened to examine the net. It was gone. To return to Michipicoten was impossible, the wind being ahead; and we steered, therefore, for the Sault. But in the evening the wind came round and blew a gale all that night and for the nine following days. During all this time the waves were so high and broke so violently on the beach that a canoe could not be put into the water.

When we first disembarked we had not enough maize to afford a single day's provision for our party, consisting as it did of five persons. What there was we consumed on the

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first evening, reckoning upon a prosperous voyage the next morning. On the first and second days I went out to hunt, but after ranging for many miles among the mountains I returned in both instances without success. On the third day I found myself too weak to walk many yards without stopping to rest myself; and I returned in the evening with no more than two snowbirds.<sup>16</sup>

On my arrival one of my men informed me that the other two had proposed to kill and feed upon the young woman; and on my examining them as to the truth of this accusation they freely avowed it, and seemed to be much dissatisfied at my opposition to their scheme.

The next morning I ascended a lofty mountain, on the top of which I found a very high rock and this covered with a lichen which the Chippewas call *waac*, and the Canadians *tripe de roche*.<sup>17</sup> I had previously been informed that on occasions of famine this vegetable has

<sup>16</sup> *Emberiza hyemalis*.—Author.

<sup>17</sup> This is an edible lichen often mentioned by early explorers. Father Ménard and his companions, wintering at Keweenaw Bay in 1660-61, used it to preserve their lives through the winter. "They would put a handful of it into their kettle, which would thicken the water ever so little, forming a kind of foam or slime like that of snails, and feeding their imagination more than their bodies." Father André records that "It is necessary to close one's eyes when one begins to eat it." *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVI, 24.—Editor.

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often been resorted to for food. No sooner, therefore, had I discovered it than I began to descend the mountain to fetch the men and the Indian woman. The woman was well acquainted with the mode of preparing the lichen for the stomach, which is done by boiling it down into a mucilage, as thick as the white of an egg. In a short time we obtained a hearty meal, for though our food was of a bitter and disagreeable taste, we felt too much joy in finding it and too much relief in eating it not to partake of it with much appetite and pleasure. As to the rest, it saved the life of the poor woman; for the men who had projected to kill her would unquestionably have accomplished their purpose. One of them gave me to understand that he was not absolutely a novice in such an affair; that he had wintered in the Northwest, and had been obliged to eat human flesh.

On the evening of the ninth day the wind fell and our canoe was launched, though not without difficulty from the weakly state of the crew. We paddled all night, but continually fell asleep, and whenever my own eyes were closed I dreamed of tempting food.

The next morning we discovered two canoes of Indians on their way from the Sault. On informing them of our condition they supplied us with as many fish as we were willing to accept; and no sooner were we possessed of this treasure than we put ashore, made a fire, and refreshed ourselves with a plentiful breakfast.

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At night we reached the Sault. Our change of diet had very serious effects upon our health, so that for myself I had nearly fallen a victim; but after a few days we recovered, and returned safely to Michipicoten.

## Chapter 6

### THE ISLAND OF YELLOW SANDS

**I**N the spring of 1769 as soon as the lake was cleared of ice I embarked with two Indians to visit the Island of Michipicoten, or Ile de Maurepas, distant ten leagues. As we approached it, it appeared large and mountainous. The Indians had informed me that it contained shining rocks and stones of rare description. I found it one solid rock, thinly covered with soil except in the valleys, but generally well wooded. Its circumference is twelve leagues. On examining the surface I saw nothing remarkable, except large veins of transparent spar, and a mass of rock at the south end of the island which appeared to be composed of iron ore.

Disappointed in my expectations here, my curiosity was raised anew by the account given me by my companions of another island almost as large as that on which I was, and lying a little farther to the southward. This they described as covered with a heavy yellow sand which I was credulous enough to fancy must be gold. All they knew, however, of the island and its heavy yellow sand was from the report of some of their ancestors, concerning whom a tradition had come down to them that being

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blown upon the former by a storm, they had escaped with difficulty from the enormous snakes by which it is inhabited, and which are the guardians of the yellow sand.<sup>18</sup> I was eager to visit so remarkable a spot, and being told that in clear weather it was visible from the southward of the Ile de Maurepas, I waited there two days; but the weather continuing hazy, I returned unsatisfied to my post.

<sup>18</sup> Captain Carver, who visited Lake Superior about the year 1766, learned something of the fables of the yellow sand, though he places the treasure upon the Ile de Maurepas, and falls into other errors. His observations are as follows: "There are many islands in this lake, two of which are very large; and if the land of them is proper for cultivation, there appears to be sufficient to form on each a considerable province; especially on Ile Royale, which cannot be less than a hundred miles long and in many places forty broad. But there is no way at present of ascertaining the exact length or breadth of either. Even the French, who always kept a small schooner on this lake whilst they were in possession of Canada, by which they could have made this discovery, have only acquired a slight knowledge of the external parts of these islands: at least, they have never published any account of the internal parts of them that I could get intelligence of.

"Nor was I able to discover, from any of the conversations which I had with the neighboring Indians, that they had ever made any settlements on them, or even landed there on their hunting excursions. From what I could gather by their discourse, they suppose them to have been, from the first formation, the residence of the Great Spirit; and relate many magical tricks that had been experienced by such as were obliged through stress of weather to take shelter on them.

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This year I attempted to cultivate culinary vegetables at Michipicoten but without success. It was not at this time believed that the potato could thrive at Michilimackinac. At Michipicoten the small quantity of this root which I raised was destroyed by the frost, in the ensuing winter.

In 1770 Mr. Baxter, who had sailed for England, returned bringing with him papers by which, with Mr. Bostwick and himself I was constituted a joint agent and partner in and for a company of adventurers for working the mines of Lake Superior. We passed the winter together at the Sault de Ste. Marie and built a barge fit for the navigation of the lake, at the

"One of the Chipeways told me that some of their people were once driven on the Island de Maurepas, which lies to the northeast part of the lake, and found on it large quantities of heavy, shining yellow sand, that from their description must have been gold dust. Being struck with the beautiful appearance of it, in the morning when they re-entered their canoe they attempted to bring some away; but a spirit of amazing size, according to their account sixty feet in height, strode into the water after them, and commanded them to deliver back what they had taken away. Terrified at his gigantic stature, and seeing that he had nearly overtaken them, they were glad to restore their shining treasure; on which they were suffered to depart without further molestation. Since this incident, no Indian that has ever heard of it will venture near the same haunted coast. Besides this, they recounted to me many other stories of these islands, equally fabulous."—*Three Years' Travels through the Interior Parts of North America, etc.* By Captain Jonathan Carver, of the Provincial Troops, etc.—Author.

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same time laying the keel of a sloop of forty tons. Early in May, 1771, the lake becoming navigable, we departed from Point aux Pins, our shipyard, at which there is a safe harbor and of which the distance from the Sault is three leagues. We sailed for the Island of Yellow Sands, promising ourselves to make our fortunes in defiance of its serpents.



## Chapter 7

### OPERATIONS OF THE COPPER COMPANY

**A**FTER a search of two days we discovered the island with our glass; and on the third morning, the weather being fair, steered for it at an early hour. At two o'clock in the afternoon we disembarked upon the beach.

I was the first to land, carrying with me my loaded gun and resolved to meet with courage the guardians of the gold. But as we had not happened to run our barge upon the yellow sands in the first instance, so no immediate attack was to be feared. A wood was before us at some little distance from the water's edge; and I presently discovered the tracks of cariboux.

Soon after I entered the woods three of these animals discovered themselves and, turning round, gazed at me with much apparent surprise. I fired at one of them and killed it; and at a mile farther I killed a second. Their size was equal to that of a three-year-old heifer. The day following I killed three.

The island is much smaller than I had been led to suppose it, its circumference not exceeding twelve miles. It is very low and contains many small lakes. These latter I conjecture to

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have been produced by the damming up of the streams by beaver, though those animals must have left the island or perished after destroying the wood. The only high land is toward the east.

A stay of three days did not enable us to find gold nor even the yellow sands. At the same time no serpents appeared to terrify us; not even the smallest and most harmless snake. But to support the romance, it might be inferred that the same agency which hid the one had changed the other; and why should not the magic of the place display itself in a thousand varied exhibitions? Why should not the serpents have been transformed into hawks? And why should not the demons delight in belying every succeeding visitor by never showing the same objects twice? Sure I am, that the hawks abounded when we were there. They hovered around us, and appeared even angry at our intrusion, pecking at us and keeping us in continual alarm for our faces. One of them actually took my cap from off my head.

On one of the lakes we saw geese; and there were a few pigeons. The only four-footed animal was the caribou and this, it is probable, was first conveyed to the island on some mass of drifting ice. It was, however, no new inhabitant; for in numerous instances I found the bones of cariboux, apparently in entire skeletons, with only the tops of their horns

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projecting from the surface, while moss or vegetable earth concealed the rest. Skeletons were so frequent as to suggest a belief that want of food in this confined situation had been the destruction of many; nor is anything more probable; and yet the absence of beasts of prey might be the real cause. In forests more ordinarily circumstanced the graminivorous animals must usually fall a prey to the carnivorous long before the arrival of old age; but in an asylum such as this, they may await the decay of nature.

The alarm of these animals during our stay was manifested in the strongest manner. At our first arrival they discovered mere surprise, running off to a distance and then returning as if out of curiosity to examine the strangers. Soon, however, they discovered us to be dangerous visitors, and then took to running from one place to another in confusion. In the three days of our stay we killed thirteen.

The island is distant sixty miles from the north shore of Lake Superior. There is no land visible to the south of it except a small island on which we landed.<sup>19</sup>

On the fourth day, after drying our caribou-meat, we sailed for Nanibojou which we

<sup>19</sup> The reader is not to look into any gazetteer for the Island of Yellow Sands. It is perhaps that which the French denominated the Ile de Pontchartrain.—Author.

The island, now called Caribou, may be found on modern maps about twenty-five miles due south of

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reached in eighteen hours, with a fair breeze. On the next day the miners examined the coast of Nanibojou and found several veins of copper and lead; and after this returned to Point aux Pins, where we erected an air-furnace. The assayer made a report on the ores which we had collected, stating that the lead-ore contained silver in the proportion of forty ounces to a ton; but the copper-ore only in very small proportion indeed.

From Point aux Pins we crossed to the south side of the lake and encamped on Point aux Iroquois.

Mr. Norburg,<sup>20</sup> a Russian gentleman acquainted with metals and holding a commission in the Sixtieth Regiment, and then in garrison at Michilimackinac, accompanied us on this latter expedition. As we rambled, examining the *shods* or loose stones in search of minerals, Mr. Norburg chanced to meet with one of eight pounds weight, of a blue color and semi-transparent. This he carried to England, where it produced in the proportion of sixty pounds of silver to a hundred weight of ore. It was repositied in the British Museum. Michipicoten Island.—Editor.

<sup>20</sup> John Nordberg became lieutenant in the Sixtieth Regiment in 1758 and captain in 1773. At the opening of the Revolution he was commandant at Fort George on Lake George. and surrendered this post to the Colonists in April. 1775. After several months imprisonment he was permitted, on account of ill-health, to return to England.—Editor.

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The same Mr. Norburg was shortly afterward appointed to the government of Lake George in the province of New York.

Hence we coasted westward, but found nothing till we reached the Ontonogan, where, besides the detached masses of copper formerly mentioned, we saw much of the same metal bedded in stone. Proposing to ourselves to make a trial on the hill till we were better able to work upon the solid rock, we built a house and sent to the Sault de Ste. Marie for provisions. At the spot pitched upon for the commencement of our preparations a green-colored water, which tinged iron of a copper color, issued from the hill; and this the miners called a leader. In digging they found frequent masses of copper, some of which were of three pounds weight. Having arranged everything for the accommodation of the miners during the winter, we returned to the Sault.

Early in the spring of 1772 we sent a boat-load of provisions, but it came back on the twentieth day of June, bringing with it, to our surprise, the whole establishment of miners. They reported that in the course of the winter they had penetrated forty feet into the hill; but that on the arrival of the thaw, the clay, on which on account of its stiffness they had relied and neglected to secure it by supporters, had fallen in; that to recommence their search would be attended with much labor and cost; that from the detached masses of metal,

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which to the last had daily presented themselves, they supposed there might be ultimately reached some body of the same, but could form no conjecture of its distance, except that it was probably so far off as not to be pursued without sinking an airshaft: and lastly, that this work would require the hands of more men than could be fed in the actual situation of the country.

Here our operations in this quarter ended. The metal was probably within our reach; but if we had found it the expense of carrying it to Montreal must have exceeded its marketable value. It was never for the exportation of copper that our company was formed; but always with a view to the silver which it was hoped the ores, whether of copper or lead, might in sufficient quantity contain. The copper ores of Lake Superior can never be profitably sought for but for local consumption. The country must be cultivated and peopled before they can deserve notice.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> The copper mines of Lake Superior have been more than once represented to the world in colors capable of deceiving fresh adventurers; and the statement in the text will not have been uselessly made, if it should at any time serve as a beacon to the unwary. The author of *Voyages from Montreal, &c.* has recently observed, that the "Americans, soon after they got possession of the country, sent an engineer"; and that he "should not be surprised to hear of their employing people to work the mine. Indeed," he adds, "it might be well worthy the attention of the British subjects to work the mines on the north coast though they are not supposed

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The neighboring lands are good. I distributed seed-maize among the Indians here, which they planted accordingly. They did the same the following year, and in both instances had good crops. Whether or not they continued the practice I cannot say. There might be much danger of their losing their seed; for their way was to eat the maize green and save only a small quantity for sowing.

In the following month of August we launched our sloop and carried the miners to the vein of copper ore on the north side of the lake. Little was done during the winter, but by

to be so rich as those on the south"; and Captain Carver has given the following account of the identical undertaking above described: "A company of adventurers from England began, soon after the conquest of Canada, to bring away some of this metal; *but the distracted situation of affairs in America has obliged them to relinquish their scheme.* It might in future times be made a very advantageous trade; as the metal, which *costs nothing* on the spot and requires but little expense to get it on board, could be conveyed in boats or canoes through the Falls of Sainte Marie to the Isle of Saint Joseph, which lies at the bottom of the strait, near the entrance into Lake Huron; from thence it might be put on board larger vessels, and in them transported across that lake to the Falls of Niagara; then being carried by land across the portage, it might be conveyed without much more obstruction to Quebec. The cheapness and ease with which any quantity of it may be procured will make up for the length of way that is necessary to transport it before it reaches the sea coast; and enable the proprietors to send it to foreign markets on as good terms as it can be exported from other countries."—*Three Years' Travels, Etc.*—Author.



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dint of labor performed between the commencement of the spring of 1773 and the ensuing month of September they penetrated thirty feet into the solid rock. The rock was blasted with great difficulty; and the vein, which at the beginning was of the breadth of four feet, had in the progress contracted into four inches. Under these circumstances we desisted, and carried the miners back to the Sault. What copper ore we had collected we sent to England; but the next season we were informed that the partners there declined entering into further expenses. In the interim we had carried the miners along the north shore as far as the river Pic, making, however, no discovery of importance. This year, therefore, 1774, Mr. Baxter disposed of the sloop and other effects of the Company, and paid its debts.

The partners in England were his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, Mr. Secretary Townshend, Sir Samuel Tutchet, Baronet; Mr. Baxter, Consul of the Empress of Russia; and Mr. Cruickshank: in America, Sir William Johnson, Baronet; Mr. Bostwick, Mr. Baxter and myself.

A charter had been petitioned for and obtained, but owing to our ill success it was never taken from the seal-office.



## Chapter 8

### JOURNEY TO LAKE WINNIPEG

PENDING this enterprise I had still pursued the Indian trade, and on its failure I applied myself to that employment with more assiduity than ever, and resolved on visiting the countries to the northwest of Lake Superior.

On the tenth day of June, 1775, I left the Sault with goods and provisions to the value of three thousand pounds sterling on board twelve small canoes and four larger ones. The provisions made the chief bulk of the cargo; no further supply being obtainable till we should have advanced far into the country. Each small canoe was navigated by three men and each larger one by four.

On the twentieth we passed the Tête de la Loutre, or Otter's Head, so named from a rock of about thirty feet in height and fifteen in circumference, and which stands vertically as if raised by the hand of man. What increases the appearance of art is a hollow in the adjacent mass of rock, which its removal might be thought to have left. In the evening we encamped at the mouth of the Pijitic, a river as large as that of Michipicoten, and which in like manner takes its rise in the high lands

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lying between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay. From Michipicoten to the Pijitic the coast of the lake is mountainous; the mountains are covered with pine and the valleys with spruce-fir.

It was by the river Pijitic <sup>22</sup> that the French ascended in 1750, when they plundered one of the factories in Hudson Bay and carried off the two small pieces of brass cannon which fell again into the hands of the English at Michilimackinac.<sup>23</sup> On the river are a band of Wood Indians, who are sometimes troublesome to the traders passing.

On the twenty-first I left the Pijitic and crossing a bay three leagues in breadth landed on Pic Island. From Pic Island I coasted ten leagues, and then encamped on an island opposite the Pays Plat, or Flat Country, a name borrowed from the Indians, and occasioned by the shoal-water, which here extends far into the lake, and by the flat and low lands

<sup>22</sup> According to Carver it was by the Michipicoten. If he is correct, it must have been from Moose Fort, in James Bay, and not from Fort Churchill, that they took the cannon.—Author.

The raid by the French upon the Hudson's Bay Company posts here alluded to actually took place in 1686, and the affair had long since become legendary among the voyageurs of the Northwest. Henry is also in error as to the route taken by the raiding party, which was by the Ottawa, Lake Abitibi, Abitibi and Moose rivers.—Editor.

<sup>23</sup> The Pijatic is now known as White River.—Editor.

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which lie between the water and the mountain.

The Pays Plat is intersected by several large rivers, and particularly the Nipigon, so called after Lake Nipigon, of which it is the discharge. By this river the French carried on a considerable trade with the Northern Indians. They had a fort or trading-house at its mouth, and annually drew from it a hundred packs of beaver of a quality more in esteem than that from the Northwest. They had another trading-house at Caministiquia.<sup>24</sup> As we proceed northwest along the lake the mountains recede widely from the beach.

On the twenty-fourth I left the northern shore and in four days reached the Grand Portage.<sup>25</sup> The intervening islands consist

<sup>24</sup> At the mouth of the Kaministiquia River, where Fort William now stands. The latter fort was erected by the North West Company in 1804. Here yearly meetings of the factors of the Company were held, the proceedings at which have been charmingly narrated by Washington Irving in *Astoria*.—Editor.

<sup>25</sup> Grand Portage was at the beginning of the Pigeon-Rainy River route from Lake Superior to Lake Winnipeg, a few miles south of the mouth of Pigeon River. The place was well known during the French period, and at the beginning of the British régime it became an important center of fur-trade activities. Jonathan Carver found many traders here in 1767. From about this time until the establishment of Fort William in 1804 Grand Portage was the center of the fur trade of the far Northwest. Its decay was owing to the discovery that it lay south of the boundary between Canada and the United States; since British traders were not permitted to operate in the latter country, upon this discovery they

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almost entirely of rock. The largest, called Ile au Tonnerre, or Thunder Island, is said by the Indians to be peculiarly subject to thunder storms. At the Grand Portage I found the traders in a state of extreme reciprocal hostility, each pursuing his interests in such a manner as might most injure his neighbor. The consequences were very hurtful to the morals of the Indians.

The transportation of the goods at this grand portage, or great carrying-place, was a work of seven days of severe and dangerous exertion, at the end of which we encamped on the River aux Groseilles.<sup>26</sup> The Grand Portage consists in two ridges of land, between which is a deep glen or valley with good meadow lands, and a broad stream of water. The lowlands are covered chiefly with birch and poplar, and the high with pine. I was now in what is technically called the Northwest; that is, the country northwest of Lake Superior. The canoes here employed are smaller than those

were forced to seek headquarters and a trade route to the West farther north. As a consequence the route by the Kaministiquia River was opened, and Fort William built at its outlet.—Editor.

<sup>26</sup> The same with what a recent traveler describes as the "river du Tourt" (Tourtre)—Dove or Pigeon River.—Author.

Modern Pigeon River was first named Groseilliers, in honor of the first French explorer in this region. The form of the name given in Henry's text is, of course, a corruption of this name.—Editor.

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which are used between Montreal and Michilimackinac and in Lake Superior, being only four fathoms and a half in length. It is the duty of the head and stern men to carry the canoe. I engaged two of these to winter with me, at the wages of four hundred dollars each and an equipment of the value, at the Grand Portage, of one hundred more.

On the eighth we ascended the Groseilles to the carrying-place called the Portage du Perdrix, where the river falls down a precipice of the height of a hundred feet. At the place where, after passing the Grand Portage, we first launched our canoes on the Groseilles the stream is thirty yards wide. From this spot it proceeds with numerous falls to Lake Superior, which it enters about six leagues to the northward of the Grand Portage.

Next day at the Portage aux Outardes we left the Groseilles, and carrying our canoes and merchandise for three miles over a mountain, came at length to a small lake. This was the beginning of a chain of lakes extending for fifteen leagues and separated by carrying-places of from half a mile to three miles in length. At the end of this chain we reached the heads of small streams which flow to the north-westward. The region of the lakes is called the Hauteur de Terre, or Land's Height. It is an elevated tract of country, not inclining in any direction, and diversified on its surface with small hills. The wood is abundant but consists

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principally in birch, pine, spruce, fir, and a small quantity of maple.

By the twelfth we arrived where the streams were large enough to float the canoes with their lading, though the men walked in the water pushing them along. Next day we found them sufficiently navigable, though interrupted by frequent falls and carrying-places. On the twentieth we reached Lake Sagunac, or Saginaga,<sup>27</sup> distant sixty leagues from the Grand Portage. This was the hithermost post in the northwest established by the French, and there was formerly a large village of the Chipewa here, now destroyed by the Nadowessies. I found only three lodges filled with poor, dirty, and almost naked inhabitants, of whom I bought fish and wild rice,<sup>28</sup> which latter they had in great abundance. When populous, this village used to be troublesome to the traders, obstructing their voyages and extorting liquor

<sup>27</sup> This lake lies much nearer Lake Superior than here indicated. Apparently modern Lake Nequaquon, on the boundary of St. Louis County, Minnesota, is the point reached by Henry.—Editor.

<sup>28</sup> *Folle avoine, avena fatua, zizania aquatica*.—Author.

The wild rice plant, here mentioned, was widely distributed over the continent of North America, and was an important article of sustenance for many tribes. It is still widely used by the natives, and has even become an article of civilized commerce, being handled regularly by the jobbing houses of Chicago and other cities. For an exhaustive study of the wild rice and its use see Albert E. Jenks, "Wild Rice Gatherers of the Upper Lakes," in Nineteenth Annual Report of Ameri-

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and other articles.<sup>29</sup> Lake Sagunac is eight leagues in length by four in breadth. The lands, which are everywhere covered with spruce, are hilly on the southwest but on the northeast more level. My men were by this time almost exhausted with fatigue, but the chief part of the labor was fortunately past.

We now entered Lake à la Pluie,<sup>30</sup> which is fifteen leagues long by five broad. Its banks are covered with maple and birch. Our encampment was at the mouth of the lake, where there is a fall of water of forty feet called the Chute de la Chaudière. The carrying-place is two hundred yards in length. On the next evening we encamped at Les Fourches, on the River à la Pluie,<sup>31</sup> where there was a village of

can Bureau of Ethnology (Washington, 1902), 1013-1137.—Editor.

<sup>29</sup> In a memorial of 1784 Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher state that the first "adventurer" who went west from Mackinac in 1765 was "stopt and plundered" by the Rainy Lake Indians. The second attempt was made in 1767, when the traders, on leaving a portion of their goods at Rainy Lake, were permitted to proceed with the remainder. In 1769 the Frobishers entered the country for the first time, and were themselves plundered by the "still ungovernable and rapacious" natives of Rainy Lake. From 1770 onward, however, the traders were more successful; the reason for the cessation of the hindrance to their trade is evidently suggested here by Henry.—Editor.

<sup>30</sup> Modern Rainy Lake.—Editor.

<sup>31</sup> Modern Rainy River, on the boundary between Canada and the United States.—Editor.



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Chippewa of fifty lodges, of whom I bought canoes. They insisted further on having goods given to them on credit, as well as on receiving some presents. The latter they regarded as an established tribute, paid them on account of the ability which they possessed to put a stop to all trade with the interior. I gave them rum, with which they became drunk and troublesome; and in the night I left them.

The River à la Pluie is forty leagues long, of a gentle current, and broken only by one rapid. Its banks are level to a great distance, and composed of a fine soil, which was covered with luxuriant grass. They were perfect solitudes, not even a canoe presenting itself along my whole navigation of the stream.<sup>32</sup> I was greatly struck with the beauty of the stream as well as with its fitness for agricultural settlements, in which provisions might be raised for the Northwest.

On the thirtieth we reached the Lake of the Woods, or Lake des Iles, at the entrance of which was an Indian village of a hundred souls, where we obtained a further supply of fish. Fish appeared to be the summer food.

From this village we received ceremonious presents. The mode with the Indians is first

<sup>32</sup> The scarcity of animal life in this vicinity at this season of the year has been remarked by many explorers. Thus, Keating, in 1823, did not meet with a single quadruped from Rainy Lake to Lake Superior, the only animals seen being thirty or forty birds, chiefly ducks.—Editor.



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to collect all the provisions they can spare and place them in a heap; after which they send for the trader and address him in a formal speech. They tell him that the Indians are happy in seeing him return to their country; that they have been long in expectation of his arrival; that their wives have deprived themselves of their provisions in order to afford him a supply; that they are in great want, being destitute of everything, and particularly of ammunition and clothing, and that what they most long for is a taste of his rum, which they uniformly denominate milk.

The present in return consisted in one keg of gunpowder of sixty pounds weight; a bag of shot and another of powder of eighty pounds each; a few smaller articles, and a keg of rum. The last appeared to be the chief treasure, though on the former depended the greater part of their winter's subsistence.

In a short time the men began to drink, while the women brought me a further and very valuable present of twenty bags of rice. This I returned with goods and rum, and at the same time offered more for an additional quantity of rice. A trade was opened, the women bartering rice while the men were drinking. Before morning I had purchased a hundred bags of nearly a bushel measure each. Without a large quantity of rice the voyage could not have been prosecuted to its completion. The canoes, as I have already observed,

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are not large enough to carry provisions, leaving merchandise wholly out of the question. The rice grows in shoal water, and the Indians gather it by shaking the ears into their canoes.

When morning arrived all the village was inebriated; and the danger of misunderstanding was increased by the facility with which the women abandoned themselves to my Canadians. In consequence I lost no time in leaving the place.

On the first day of August we encamped on a sandy island in the Lake of the Woods, where we were visited by several canoes, of whom we purchased wild rice. On the fourth we reached the Portage du Rat.

The Lake of the Woods is thirty-six leagues long. On the west side is an old French fort or trading-house,<sup>33</sup> formerly frequented by numerous bands of Chippewa, but these have since been almost entirely destroyed by the Nadowessies. When strong they were troublesome. On account of a particular instance of pillage they have been called *Pilleurs*.<sup>34</sup> The

<sup>33</sup> This was Fort St. Charles, built by the French in 1732. It stood on the north bank of the inlet of the Northwest Angle, west of Famine (or Buckett) Island.—Editor.

<sup>34</sup> In Warren's *History of the Ojibways*, Chapter XVI is devoted to an account of the event by which this band of the Chippewa won the designation of "Pillagers," and the affair is described as having taken place in 1781. Evidently the affair had become a matter of tribal

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pelican is numerous on this lake. One which we shot agreed entirely with the description of M. de Buffon.

On the fifth we passed the Portage du Rat,<sup>35</sup> which is formed by a rock of about twenty yards long. Here we met several canoes of Indians, who all begged for rum; but they were known to belong to the band of Pilleurs, also called the rogues, and were on that account refused.

From the Portage du Rat we descended the great river Winipeg which is there from one mile to two in breadth and at every league grows broader. The channel is deep, but obstructed by many islands, of which some are large. For several miles the stream is confined between perpendicular rocks. The current is strong and the navigation singularly difficult. Within the space of fifteen leagues there are seven falls of from fifty feet to a hundred in height. At sixty leagues from our entrance of the Winipeg we crossed a carrying-place into the Pinawa,<sup>36</sup> below which the dangers traditions for Henry's narrative discloses that the name was in use at a somewhat earlier date.—Editor.

<sup>35</sup> The name is said to have originated from the fact of muskrats crossing here in large numbers. Rat Portage is near the northern end of Lake of the Woods. Here the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway crosses from the town of Rat Portage to Keewatin on the opposite side of the river.—Editor.

<sup>36</sup> The Pinawa River is a branch of the Winnipeg which was commonly followed by the traders as far as Bonnet Lake, who avoided thereby seven dangerous

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of the Winipegou are still further increased. The adjacent lands are mountainous and rocky, but some of the high hills are well covered with birch and maple.

The stream of the Pinawa is shallow and its bed rocky and broken. The carrying-places are eight in number. The mosquitoes were here in such clouds as to prevent us from taking aim at the ducks, of which we might else have shot many.

On the thirteenth we encamped at the Carry-ing-place of the Lost Child. Here is a chasm in the rock, nowhere more than two yards in breadth, but of great and immeasurable depth. The Indians relate that many ages past a child fell into this chasm, from the bottom of which it is still heard at times to cry. In all the wet lands wild rice grows plentifully.

The Pinawa is twenty leagues long, and discharges itself into Lake du Bonnet<sup>37</sup> at three leagues to the north of the mouth of the Winipegou, which falls into the same lake, or rather forms it; for Lake du Bonnet is only a broadened part of the channel of the Winipegou. The lake is two leagues broad, and the river in its course below continues broader than it is above, with many islands and deep falls; the

portages in this portion of the Winnipeg, and saved, in addition, several miles of travel.—Editor.

<sup>37</sup> Cap Lake, in some maps written *Cat Lake*.—Author.

Instead of twenty leagues, the Pinawa is but eighteen miles long.—Editor.

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danger of the navigation, however, is lessened.

On the sixteenth we reached Lake Winnipeg, at the entrance of which is a large village of Christinaux, a nation which I had not previously seen. The name is variously written; as, Cristinaux, Kinistineaux, Killistinoes, and Killistinaux. Lake Winnipeg is sometimes called the Lake of the Killistinons, or Cristinaux. The dress and other exterior appearances of the Cristinaux are very distinguishable from those of the Chippewa and the Wood Indians.

The men were almost entirely naked, and their bodies painted with a red ocher, procured in the mountains and often called vermilion. Every man and boy had his bow strung and in his hand, and his arrow ready to attack in case of need. Their heads were shaved or the hair plucked out all over except a spot on the crown of the diameter of a dollar. On this spot the hair grew long and was rolled and gathered into a tuft; and the tuft, which is an object of the greatest care, was covered with a piece of skin. The ears were pierced and filled with the bones of fish and of land animals. Such was the costume of the young men; but among the old, some let their hair grow on all parts of their head without any seeming regard.

The women wear their hair of a great length both behind and before, dividing it on the forehead and at the back of the head, and collecting the hair of each side into a roll which is fastened

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above the ear; and this roll, like the tuft on the heads of the men, is covered with a piece of skin. The skin is painted or else ornamented with beads of various colors. The rolls with their coverings resembled a pair of large horns. The ears of the women are pierced and decorated like those of the men.

Their clothing is of leather, or dressed skins of the wild ox and the elk. The dress, falling from the shoulders to below the knee, is of one entire piece. Girls of an early age wear their dresses shorter than those more advanced. The same garment covers the shoulders and the bosom, and is fastened by a strap which passes over the shoulders; it is confined about the waist by a girdle. The stockings are of leather, made in the fashion of leggings. The arms to the shoulders are left naked, or are provided with sleeves, which are sometimes put on and sometimes suffered to hang vacant from the shoulders. The wrists are adorned with bracelets of copper or brass, manufactured from old kettles. In general, one person is worth but one dress; and this is worn as long as it will last or till a new one is made, and then thrown away.

The women, like the men, paint their faces with red ocher, and in addition usually tattoo two lines reaching from the lip to the chin or from the corners of the mouth to the ears. They omit nothing to make themselves lovely.

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Meanwhile, a favorite employment is that of waging war with certain animals, which are in abundance on their persons and which, as they catch, they eat. To frequent inquiries as to the motive for eating them I was always answered that they afforded a medicinal food and great preventive of diseases.

Such are the exterior beauties of the female Cristinaux; and not content with the power belonging to these attractions they condescend to beguile with gentle looks the hearts of passing strangers. The men, too, unlike the Chippewa (who are of a jealous temper) eagerly encourage them in this design. One of the chiefs assured me that the children borne by their women to Europeans were bolder warriors and better hunters than themselves.

The Cristinaux have usually two wives each, and often three; and make no difficulty in lending one of them, for a length of time to a friend. Some of my men entered into agreements with the respective husbands in virtue of which they embarked the women in their canoes, promising to return them the next year. The women so selected consider themselves as honored, and the husband who should refuse to lend his wife would fall under the condemnation of the sex in general.

The language of the Cristinaux is a dialect of the Algonquin, and therefore bears some affinity to that of the Chippewa, which is

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another dialect of the same. In the Northwest it is commonly called Cree or Cris.



## Chapter 9

### FROM LAKE WINNIPEG TO BEAVER LAKE

THE Cristinaux made me the usual presents of wild rice and dried meat, and accompanied them with the usual formalities. I remained at their village two days repairing my canoes; and though they were drunk the whole time they behaved very peaceably and gave me no annoyance. I observed that two men constantly attended us, and that these individuals could not be prevailed upon to taste liquor. They had been assigned us for a guard, and they would not allow any drunken Indian to approach our camp.

On the eighteenth of August I left these amicable people, among whom an intercourse with Europeans appeared to have occasioned less deviation from their primitive manners than in any instance which I had previously discovered. I kept the north side of the lake, and had not proceeded far before I was joined by Mr. Pond, a trader of some celebrity in the Northwest.<sup>38</sup> Next day we encountered a

<sup>38</sup> Peter Pond was a native of Milford, Connecticut, born in 1740. He enlisted for the Seven Years' War, and at its conclusion, turned his attention to the sea. Before long, however, he engaged in the Indian trade at Detroit and other points, and in 1773 came out to Wisconsin and Minnesota on a new venture. In 1775 he

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severe gale, from the dangers of which we escaped by making the island called the Buffalo's Head; but not without the loss of a canoe and four men. The shores from the entrance of this lake to the island with exception of the points are rocky and lofty; the points are rocky, but low. The wood is pine and fir. We took pouts, cat-fish, or catheads, of six pounds weight.

On the twenty-first we crossed to the south shore and reached Oak Point, so called from a few scrub oaks which here begin to diversify the forest of pine and fir. The pelicans, which we everywhere saw, appeared to be impatient of the long stay we made in fishing. Leaving the island, we found the lands along the shore

went into the Lake Winnipeg region for the first time, where he encountered Henry. Three years later all the traders of this district, including Pond, met at Sturgeon Lake and agreed to pool their interests. This was the beginning of the famous North West Company. Pond was a man of pugnacious disposition. In the Detroit period of his trading career he fought a duel in which his opponent fell, and which caused Pond to leave the country. In 1782 he shot and killed a trader named Wadin, with whom he had had a quarrel. Wadin's widow applied for a trial and Pond was sent to Quebec to stand trial, but was acquitted for lack of jurisdiction. Returning to the Northwest, he killed John Ross, a well-known trader, in a duel fought at Great Slave Lake in 1787. The next year he sold his interest in the North West Company and retired to the United States, dying at his native Milford in 1807. Pond's journal of his earlier years in the army and the fur trade is printed in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XVIII, 314-54.—Editor.

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low and wooded with birch and marsh maple intermixed with spruce-fir. The beach is gravelly, and the points rocky.

To the westward of Pike River, which we passed on the first of September, is a rock of great length, called the Roche Rouge, and entirely composed of a *pi  re    calumet*, or stone used by the Indians for making tobacco-pipe bowls. It is of a light red color, interspersed with veins of brown, and yields very readily to the knife.

On the seventh of September we were overtaken by Messrs. Joseph and Thomas Frobisher<sup>39</sup> and Mr. Patterson.<sup>40</sup> On the twentieth we crossed the bay together, composing a fleet of thirty canoes and a hundred and thirty men. We were short of provisions.

On the twenty-first it blew hard and snow began to fall. The storm continued till the

<sup>39</sup> The brothers Frobisher, Joseph, Thomas, and Benjamin, were among the early British traders to come into the Northwest. Joseph and Thomas founded the firm of Frobisher Brothers, but in 1778 Thomas retired and Benjamin succeeded him. Joseph and Benjamin were active in the formation of the North West Company. Joseph was a noted explorer of western Canada. He retired from the fur trade in 1798, living thereafter at Montreal.—Editor.

<sup>40</sup> Charles Patterson was another early British trader in the Northwest, and one of the founders of the North West Company. In 1788 he was drowned with his entire crew in Lake Michigan near a place still known as Patterson's Point, in western Mackinac County, Michigan.—Editor.

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twenty-fifth, by which time the small lakes were frozen over and two feet of snow lay on level ground in the woods. This early severity of the season filled us with serious alarm, for the country was uninhabited for two hundred miles on every side of us and if detained by winter our destruction was certain. In this state of peril we continued our voyage day and night. The fears of our men were a sufficient motive for their exertions.

On the first of October we gained the mouth of the River de Bourbon, Pasquayah, or Sascatchiwaine<sup>41</sup> and proceeded to ascend its stream. The Bourbon is a large river and has its sources to the westward.<sup>42</sup> The lands which we passed after the twenty-first of September are more hilly and rocky than those described before. The trees are poplar and spruce. The rocks are chiefly of limestone. Our course from the entrance of Lake Winipeg was north-west northerly. The lake contains sturgeon, but we were not able to take any. At four leagues above the mouth of the river is the Grand Rapide, two leagues in length, up which the canoes are dragged with ropes. At the end of this is a carrying-place of two miles, through

<sup>41</sup> The lower part of the Sascatchiwaine was once called the River de Bourbon. Pasquayah is the name of an upper portion of the Sascatchiwaine.—Author.

<sup>42</sup> The river is the modern Saskatchewan, which gives name to a province of Canada and drains a vast area between the Rocky Mountains and Lake Winnipeg.—Editor.

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a forest almost uniformly of pine trees. Here we met with Indians fishing for sturgeon. Their practice is to watch behind the points where the current forms an eddy, in which the sturgeon, coming to rest themselves, are easily speared. The soil is light and sandy. A vessel of any burden might safely navigate Lake Winipeg from its southwest corner to the Grand Rapide.

Lake Winipeg, or Winipic, or the Lake of the Killistinos, or Cristinaux, empties itself into Hudson's Bay at Fort York by a river sometimes called Fort Nelson River. Its length is said to be one hundred and twenty leagues. Its breadth is unknown. I saw no land in any direction after leaving Oak Point.

On the second we continued our voyage against the current of the Bourbon, which was strong and interrupted by several rapids. On the third we entered Lake de Bourbon, called by the English after the Indians Cedar Lake. This name is derived from the cedar tree (*thuya*) which covers its banks, and which is not found to the northward of this region.

On the fourth we reached the opposite extremity of Lake de Bourbon. This lake is eighteen leagues in length and has many deep bays receding to the northward. The land by which they are bordered is in almost all instances out of sight. Several islands, some of which are large, are also in this lake. The shores are generally rocky. At the north end

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there was in the French time a fort, or trading-house, called Fort de Bourbon and built by M. de Saint Pierre, a French officer, who was the first adventurer into these parts of the country.<sup>43</sup>

At and adjacent to this fort are several of the mouths of the river Sascatchiwaine. Here we took several sturgeon, using a seine the meshes of which were large enough to admit the fish's head and which we made fast to two canoes.

On the sixth we ascended the Sascatchiwaine, the current of which was here only moderately strong; but the banks were marshy and overflowed so that it was with difficulty we found a dry space large enough to encamp upon. Beaver lodges were numerous, and the river was everywhere covered with geese, ducks, and other wild fowl. No rising ground was to be seen and the wood, which was chiefly willow, nowhere exceeded a man's wrist in thickness.

On the eighth we resumed our voyage before daylight, making all speed to reach a fishing-place, since winter was very fast approaching. Meeting two canoes of Indians, we engaged them to accompany us as hunters. The number of ducks and geese which they killed was absolutely prodigious.

<sup>43</sup> In 1766 Carver calls Lake de Bourbon "the most northward of those yet discovered."—Author.

Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Vrendrye, notable explorer of the Canadian Northwest, established Fort Bourbon here in 1749. The Lake is now known as Cedar Lake.—Editor.

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At eighty leagues above Fort de Bourbon, at the head of a stream which falls into the Saskatchewan and into which we had turned, we found the Pasquayah village.<sup>44</sup> It consisted of thirty families, lodged in tents of a circular form and composed of dressed ox-skins, stretched upon poles twelve feet in length, and leaning against a stake driven into the ground in the center.

On our arrival the chief, named Chatique, or the Pelican, came down upon the beach attended by thirty followers, all armed with bows and arrows and with spears. Chatique was a man of more than six feet in height, somewhat corpulent and of a very doubtful physiognomy. He invited us to his tent, and we observed that he was particularly anxious to bestow his hospitalities on those who were the owners of the goods. We suspected an evil design but judged it better to lend ourselves to the treachery than to discover fear. We entered the lodge accordingly, and soon perceived that we were surrounded by armed men.

Chatique presently rose up and told us that he was glad to see us arrive; that the young men of the village as well as himself had long been in want of many things of which we were possessed in abundance; that we must be well aware of his power to prevent our going farther;

<sup>44</sup> At the junction of the Pasquia River with the Saskatchewan. Here the French built Fort Paskoyac before 1755. It is the site of modern Pas Mission or Cumberland Station.—Editor.



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that if we passed now he could put us all to death on our return; and that under these circumstances he expected us to be exceedingly liberal in our presents: adding, that to avoid misunderstanding he would inform us of what it was that he must have. It consisted in three casks of gunpowder, four bags of shot and ball, two bales of tobacco, three kegs of rum, and three guns, together with knives, flints, and some smaller articles. He went on to say that he had before now been acquainted with white men and knew that they promised more than they performed; that with the number of men which he had, he could take the whole of our property without our consent; and that, therefore, his demands ought to be regarded as very reasonable: that he was a peaceable man and one that contented himself with moderate views, in order to avoid quarrels; finally, that he desired us to signify our assent to his proposition before we quitted our places.

The men in the canoes exceeded the Indians in number, but they were unarmed and without a leader; our consultation was, therefore, short, and we promised to comply. This done, the pipe was handed round as usual and the omission of this ceremony on our entrance had sufficiently marked the intentions of Chatique. The pipe dismissed, we obtained permission to depart, for the purpose of assorting the presents; and these bestowed, or rather yielded up, we hastened away from the plunderers.



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We had supposed the affair finished, but before we had proceeded two miles we saw a canoe behind us. On this we dropped astern to give the canoes that were following us an opportunity of joining, lest, being alone, they should be insulted. Presently, however, Chatique in a solitary canoe rushed into the midst of our squadron and boarded one of our canoes, spear in hand, demanding a keg of rum and threatening to put to death the first that opposed him. We saw that our only alternative was to kill this daring robber or to submit to his exaction. The former part would have been attended with very mischievous consequences, and we therefore curbed our indignation and chose the latter. On receiving the rum, he saluted us with the Indian cry, and departed.

Every day we were on the water before dawn and paddled along till dark. The nights were frosty and no provisions, excepting a few wild fowl, were to be procured. We were in daily fear that our progress would be arrested by the ice.

On the twenty-sixth we reached Cumberland House, one of the factories of the Hudson's Bay Company, seated on Sturgeon Lake in about  $54^{\circ}$  north latitude and  $102^{\circ}$  longitude west from Greenwich. This house had been built the year before by Mr. Hearne, who was now absent on his well-known journey of discovery.<sup>45</sup> We found it garrisoned by High-

<sup>45</sup> Samuel Hearne made his notable voyages of exploration from Prince of Wales Fort to the Arctic

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## Alexander Henry

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landers from the Orkney Islands, and under the command of a Mr. Cockings,<sup>46</sup> by whom, though unwelcome guests,<sup>47</sup> we were treated with much civility. The design in building this house, was to prevent the Indians from dealing with the Canadian merchants, and to induce them to go to Hudson's Bay. It is Ocean in the years 1769-72. He established Cumberland House, as Henry states, but this was two years after, rather than before his famous exploration to the Arctic. Cumberland House, says Elliott Coues, was at "the focus of a vast network of waters whose strands radiate in every direction. A canoe could start from this house, and with no portage of more than a day's length could be launched on the Arctic Ocean, Hudson's Bay, Gulf of St. Lawrence, or Gulf of Mexico; and without much greater interruption could be floated on to the Pacific Ocean."—Editor.

<sup>46</sup> Matthew Cocking was a trader of the Hudson's Bay Company who in 1772-73 had conducted an exploration from York Factory southwestward into the country of the Blackieet. The discoveries made on this journey determined the Company to establish Cumberland House the following year, and Cocking was placed in command. His journal of his journey of 1772-73 is printed in Royal Society of Canada, *Proceedings and Transactions*, Third Series, Vol. II, 91-121.—Editor.

<sup>47</sup> Cumberland House was a post of the Hudson's Bay Company, by whom Henry and the other Canadian traders were regarded as interlopers. The North West Company, which these traders were shortly to create, conducted, throughout its entire history, a fierce trade rivalry with the older firm, which reached the height, finally, of open warfare between the partisans of the two. This was terminated by the amalgamation of the North West with the Hudson's Bay Company in 1821.—Editor.

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distant one hundred leagues from Chatique's village, and of this space the first fifty leagues comprise lands nearly level with the water; but in the latter the surface is more lofty, rising a hundred feet above the river, and increasing in height as we advanced. The soil is a white clay, mixed with sand. The wood is small and scanty.

At Cumberland House the canoes separated, M. Cadotte going with four to Fort des Prairies, Mr. Pond with two to Fort Dauphin, and others proceeding on still different routes. Messrs. Frobisher retained six and myself four, and we resolved on joining our stock and wintering together. We steered for the river Churchill, or Missinipi, to the east of Beaver Lake, or Lake aux Castors.

Sturgeon Lake,<sup>48</sup> which we now crossed, is twenty leagues in length. On the east are high lands, and on the west low islands. The river Maligne<sup>49</sup> falls into it. This we ascended, but not without much labor from the numerous rapids, on account of which the Canadians in their vexation have given it the name it bears.

We crossed Beaver Lake<sup>50</sup> on the first day of November, and the very next morning it

<sup>48</sup> Now known as Cumberland Lake. Its principal northeastern offset, known as Namew Lake, is the initial one of the great chain of lakes which, says Coues, "offer a practicable thoroughfare" to Hudson Bay and the Arctic Ocean.—Editor.

<sup>49</sup> Modern Sturgeon Weir River.—Editor.

<sup>50</sup> Now called Amisk Lake, in eastern Saskatchewan.—Editor.

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was frozen over. Happily we were now at a place abounding with fish, and here, therefore, we resolved on wintering.

Our first object was to procure food. We had only three days' stock remaining and we were forty-three persons in number. Our forty men were divided into three parties, of which two were detached to the River aux Castors,<sup>51</sup> on which the ice was strong enough to allow of setting the nets, in the manner heretofore described. The third party was employed in building our house, or fort; and in this within ten days we saw ourselves commodiously lodged. Indeed, we had almost built a village; or, in soberer terms, we had raised buildings round a quadrangle such as really assumed in the wilds which encompassed it a formidable appearance. In front was the house designed for Messrs. Frobisher and myself; and the men had four houses, of which one was placed on each side and two in the rear.

Our canoes were disposed of on scaffolds, for the ground being frozen we could not bury them, as is the usual practice, and which is done to protect them from that severity of cold which occasions the bark to contract and split.

The houses being finished, we divided the men anew, making four parties of nine each.

<sup>51</sup> Still known by the English equivalent of Beaver River. It was early an important trade route, since by its headwaters there is an easy portage to Lac la Biche, which drains into the Athabasca River.—Editor.

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Four were retained as wood cutters; and each party was to provide for its own subsistence.

Our fishing was very successful. We took trout of the weight of from ten to fifty pounds, whitefish of five pounds, and pike of the usual size. There were also pickerel, called *poissons dores* (gilt fish) and sturgeon, but of the last we caught only one. The Indians soon after our arrival killed two elks, otherwise called moose-deer.<sup>52</sup>

Lake aux Castors, or Beaver Lake, is seven leagues in length and from three to five in breadth. It has several islands, of which the largest does not exceed a mile in circumference. The lands on either shore are mountainous and rocky.

Messrs. Frobisher and myself were continually employed in fishing. We made holes in the ice and took trout with the line in twenty and thirty fathoms water, using whitefish of a pound weight for our bait, which we sunk to the bottom, or very near it.

In this manner I have at times caught more than twenty large trout a day, but my more usual mode was that of spearing. By one means or other fish was plenty with us, but we suffered severely from the cold in fishing. On the twenty-fifth the frost was so excessive that we had nearly perished. Fahrenheit's thermometer was at 32° below in the shade; the

<sup>52</sup> *Cervus alces*.—Author.

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mercury contracted one-eighth, and for four days did not rise into the tube.

Several Indians brought beaver and bears' meat, and some skins for sale. Their practice was to remain with us one night and leave us in the morning.

## Chapter 10

### FROM BEAVER LAKE TO THE PRAIRIES

THE plains, or as the French denominate them the prairies, or meadows, compose an extensive tract of country which is watered by the Elk or Athabasca, the Saskatchewan, the Red River and others, and runs southward to the Gulf of Mexico. On my first setting out for the Northwest I promised myself to visit this region, and I now prepared to accomplish the undertaking. Long journeys on the snow are thought of but as trifles in this part of the world.

On the first day of January, 1776, I left our fort on Beaver Lake, attended by two men and provided with dried meat, frozen fish, and a small quantity of praline, made of roasted maize rendered palatable with sugar, and which I had brought from the Sault de Ste. Marie for this express occasion. The kind and friendly disposition of Mr. Joseph Frobisher induced him to bear me company as far as Cumberland House, a journey of a hundred and twenty miles. Mr. Frobisher was attended by one man.

Our provisions were drawn by the men upon sledges made of thin boards, a foot in breadth and curved upward in front after the Indian

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fashion. Our clothing for night and day was nearly the same; and the cold was so intense that, exclusively of warm woolen clothes, we were obliged to wrap ourselves continually in beaver blankets, or at least in ox skins, which the traders call *buffalo robes*. At night we made our first encampment at the head of the Maligne, where one of our parties was fishing with but very indifferent success.

On the following evening we encamped at the mouth of the same river. The snow was four feet deep, and we found it impossible to keep ourselves warm even with the aid of a large fire.

On the fourth day as well of the month as of our journey, we arrived at Cumberland House. Mr. Cockings received us with much hospitality, making us partake of all he had, which however was but little. Himself and his men subsisted wholly upon fish, in which sturgeon bore the largest proportion, and this was caught near the house. The next morning I took leave of Mr. Frobisher, who is certainly the first man that ever went the same distance in such a climate and upon snowshoes to convey a friend.

From Cumberland House I pursued a westerly course on the ice, following the southern bank of Sturgeon Lake till I crossed the neck of land by which alone it is separated from the great river Pasquayah, or Saskatchewan. In the evening I encamped on the north bank of



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this river at the distance of ten leagues from Cumberland House.

The depth of the snow and the intenseness of the cold rendered my progress so much slower than I had reckoned upon that I soon began to fear the want of provisions. The sun did not rise till half past nine o'clock in the morning and it set at half past two in the afternoon; it is, however, at no time wholly dark in these climates, the northern lights and the reflection of the snow affording always sufficient light for the traveler. Add to this that the river, the course of which I was ascending, was a guide with the aid of which I could not lose my way. Every day's journey was commenced at three o'clock in the morning.

I was not far advanced before the country betrayed some approaches to the characteristic nakedness of the plains. The wood dwindled away both in size and quantity, so that it was with difficulty that we could collect sufficient for making a fire, and without fire we could not drink, for melted snow was our only resource, the ice on the river being too thick to be penetrated by the axe.

On the evening of the sixth, the weather continuing severely cold, I made my two men sleep on the same skin with myself, one on each side; and though this arrangement was particularly beneficial to myself, it increased the comfort of all. At the usual hour in the morning we attempted to rise, but found that

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a foot of snow had fallen upon our bed, as well as extinguished and covered our fire. In this situation we remained till daybreak, when with much exertion we collected fresh fuel. Proceeding on our journey, we found that the use of our sledges had become impracticable through the quantity of newly fallen snow, and were now constrained to carry our provisions on our backs. Unfortunately, they were a diminished burden.

For the two days succeeding the depth of the snow and the violence of the winds greatly retarded our journey; but from the ninth to the twelfth the elements were less hostile, and we traveled rapidly. No trace of anything human presented itself on our road, except that we saw the old wintering-ground of Mr. Finlay,<sup>53</sup> who had left it some years before and was now stationed at Fort des Prairies. This fort was the stage we had to make before we could enter the prairies, or plains; and on examining our provisions we found only sufficient for five days, while even at the swiftest rate we had traveled, a journey of twelve days was before us. My men began to fear being starved, as seeing no prospect of relief; but I endeavored to maintain their courage by

<sup>53</sup> James Finlay, one of the earliest English traders to penetrate to this portion of Canada. Matthew Cocking's journal shows that he was here as early as 1767. He later retired to Montreal, where he became a prominent citizen. Finlay River is named for his son James, who entered the fur trade in 1785.—Editor.

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representing that I should certainly kill red deer and elk, of which the tracks were visible along the banks of the river and on the sides of the hills. What I hoped for in this respect it was not easy to accomplish, for the animals kept within the shelter of the woods and the snow was too deep to let me seek them there.

On the fifteenth our situation was rendered still more alarming by the commencement of a fresh fall of snow, which added nearly two feet to the depth of that which was on the ground before. At the same time, we were scarcely able to collect enough wood for making a fire to melt the snow. The only trees around us were starveling willows, and the hills which discovered themselves at a small distance were bare of every vegetable production, such as could rear itself above the snow. Their appearance was rather that of lofty snow-banks, than of hills. We were now on the borders of the plains.

On the twentieth the last remains of our provisions were expended, but I had taken the precaution to conceal a cake of chocolate in reserve for an occasion like that which was now arrived. Toward evening my men, after walking the whole day, began to lose their strength, but we nevertheless kept on our feet till it was late; and when we encamped I informed them of the treasure which was still in store. I desired them to fill the kettle with snow, and argued with them the while that the

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chocolate would keep us alive for five days at least, an interval in which we should surely meet with some Indian at the chase. Their spirits revived at the suggestion, and the kettle being filled with two gallons of water, I put into it one square of chocolate. The quantity was scarcely sufficient to alter the color of the water; but each of us drank half a gallon of the warm liquor, by which we were much refreshed, and in its enjoyment felt no more the fatigues of the day. In the morning we allowed ourselves a similar repast, after finishing which we marched vigorously for six hours. But now the spirits of my companions again deserted them and they declared that they neither would nor could proceed any farther. For myself, they advised me to leave them and accomplish the journey as I could, but for themselves they said that they must die soon and might as well die where they were as anywhere else.

While things were in this melancholy posture I filled the kettle and boiled another square of chocolate. When prepared, I prevailed upon my desponding companions to return to their warm beverage. On taking it they recovered inconceivably, and after smoking a pipe consented to go forward. While their stomachs were comforted by the warm water they walked well; but as evening approached, fatigue overcame them and they relapsed into their former condition; and the chocolate now

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being almost entirely consumed I began to fear that I must really abandon them; for I was able to endure more hardship than they; and had it not been for keeping company with them I could have advanced double the distance within the time which had been spent. To my great joy, however, the usual quantity of warm water revived them.

For breakfast the next morning I put the last square of chocolate into the kettle, and our meal finished, we began our march in but very indifferent spirits. We were surrounded by large herds of wolves, which sometimes came close upon us, and who knew, as we were prone to think, the extremity in which we were and marked us for their prey; but I carried a gun and this was our protection. I fired several times but unfortunately missed at each, for a morsel of wolf's flesh would have afforded us a banquet.

Our misery, nevertheless, was still nearer its end than we imagined, and the event was such as to give one of the innumerable proofs that despair is not made for man. Before sunset we discovered on the ice some remains of the bones of an elk, left there by the wolves. Having instantly gathered them, we encamped, and filling our kettle, prepared ourselves a meal of strong and excellent soup. The greater part of the night was passed in boiling and regaling on our booty, and early in the morning we felt ourselves strong enough to proceed.

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This day, the twenty-fifth, we found the borders of the plains reaching to the very banks of the river, which were two hundred feet above the level of the ice. Water marks presented themselves at twenty feet above the actual level.

Want had lost its dominion over us. At noon we saw the horns of a red deer standing in the snow on the river. On examination we found that the whole carcass was with them, the animal having broken through the ice in the beginning of the winter in attempting to cross the river too early in the season; while his horns, fastening themselves in the ice, had prevented him from sinking. By cutting away the ice we were enabled to lay bare a part of the back and shoulders and thus procure a stock of food amply sufficient for the rest of our journey. We accordingly encamped and employed our kettle to good purpose, forgot all our misfortunes, and prepared to walk with cheerfulness the twenty leagues which, as we reckoned, still lay between ourselves and Fort des Prairies.

Though the deer must have been in this situation ever since the month of November, yet its flesh was perfectly good. Its horns alone were five feet high or more; and it will therefore not appear extraordinary that they should be seen above the snow.

On the twenty-seventh, in the morning, we discovered the print of snowshoes, demon-

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strating that several persons had passed that way the day before. These were the first marks of other human feet than our own which we had seen since our leaving Cumberland House; and it was much to feel that we had fellow-creatures in the wide waste surrounding us. In the evening we reached the fort.<sup>54</sup>

At Fort des Prairies I remained several days, hospitably entertained by my friends, who covered their table with the tongues and marrow of wild bulls. The quantity of provisions which I found collected here exceeded everything of which I had previously formed a notion. In one heap I saw fifty tons of beef, so fat that the men could scarcely find a sufficiency of lean.

I had come to see the plains, and I had yet a serious journey to perform in order to gratify my curiosity. Their southern boundary I have already named; and I understood that they stretched northward to the sixtieth degree of north latitude and westward to the feet of the Rocky Mountains, or Northern Andes, of which the great chain pursues a northwesterly direction. The mountains seen in high latitudes were regarded as part of this chain, and said to be inhabited by numerous bands of Indians.

<sup>54</sup> This fort was "about twelve miles in an air line" below the forks of the Saskatchewan, on the site of an older fort established by the French in 1753. Here a century later the Hudson's Bay Company had Fort à la Corne, named in honor of the builder of the original French fort, M. de la Corne.—Editor.



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## Alexander Henry

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The Plains cross the River Pasquayah, Kejeechewon, Sascatchiwaine, or Shascatchiwan, a little above Fort des Prairies.

The Indians who inhabit them immediately to the southward are called Osinipoilles or Assiniboins.<sup>55</sup> At the fort I met with a woman who was a slave among the Osinipoilles, taken far to the westward of the mountains in a country which the latter incessantly ravage. She informed me that the men of the country never suffer themselves to be taken, but always die in the field rather than fall into captivity. The women and children are made slaves, but are not put to death nor tormented.<sup>56</sup> Her nation lived on a great river running to the southwest, and cultivated beans, squashes, maize, and tobacco. The lands were generally mountainous and covered with pine and fir. She had heard of men who wear their beards. She had been taken in one of the incursions of the Osinipoilles. Of the men who were in the village, the greater part were killed, but a few escaped by swimming across the river.

<sup>55</sup> The Assiniboin tribe is closely related to the Sioux, having seceded from the latter in the seventeenth century, according to Perrot.—Editor.

<sup>56</sup> The Five Nations, and others, are known to have treated their prisoners with great cruelty; but there is too much reason to believe that the exercise of this cruelty has been often encouraged, and its malignity often increased, by European instigators and assistants.—Author.



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## Travels and Adventures

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The woman belonged to a numerous band of Osinipoilles which was at the fort selling its meat and skins. I resolved on traveling with these people to their village, and accordingly set out on the fifth of February, accompanied by Messrs. Patterson and Holmes,<sup>57</sup> and attended by my two Canadians.

<sup>57</sup> William Holmes, a prominent Northwestern trader, and one of the stockholders in the North West Company. A partner of Holmes, James Grant, was also active in the fur trade of the interior. Grant River and County in southwestern Wisconsin are probably named after this man.—Editor.

## Chapter 11

### A JOURNEY ON THE PLAINS

WE departed at an early hour and after a march of about two miles ascended the table land which lies above the river, and of which the level is two hundred feet higher than that of the land on which the fort is built. From the low ground upward the soil is covered with poplar of a large growth, but the summit of the ridge is no sooner gained than the wood is found to be smaller and so thinly scattered that a wheel carriage might pass in any direction. At noon we crossed a small river called Moose River, flowing at the feet of very lofty banks. Moose River is said to fall into Lake Dauphin.

Beyond this stream the wood grows still more scanty and the land more and more level. Our course was southerly. The snow lay four feet deep. The Indians traveled swiftly, and in keeping pace with them my companions and myself had too much exercise to suffer from the coldness of the atmosphere; but our snowshoes being of a broader make than those of the Indians, we had much fatigue in following their track. The women led and we marched till sunset when we reached a small coppice of wood, under the protection of which

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we encamped. The baggage of the Indians was drawn by dogs, who kept pace with the women and appeared to be under their command. As soon as we halted the women set up the tents, which were constructed and covered like those of the Christinaux.

The tent in which I slept contained fourteen persons, each of whom lay with his feet to the fire, which was in the middle; but the night was so cold that even this precaution, with the assistance of our buffalo robes, was insufficient to keep us warm. Our supper was made on the tongues of the wild ox, or buffalo, boiled in my kettle, which was the only one in the camp.

At break of day, or rather before that time, we left our encampment, the women still preceding us. On our march we saw but little wood, and that only here and there and at great distances. We crossed two rivulets stealing along the bottom of very deep channels, which, no doubt, are better filled in the season of the melting of the snow. The banks here as on the Pasquayah or Sascatchiwaine are composed of a whitish clay, mingled with sand.

On the sixth of February we had a fine clear sky, but the air was exceedingly cold and bleak, no shelter from woods being afforded us on either side. There was but little wind, and yet at times enough to cause a slight drift of snow. In the evening we encamped in a small wood, of which the largest trees did not exceed a man's wrist in thickness. On the seventh we

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left our encampment at an early hour. Tracks of large herds of animals presented themselves, which the Indians said were those of red deer. Our course was southwest and the weather very cold. The country was one uninterrupted plain, in many parts of which no wood, not even the smallest shrub, was to be seen; a continued level without a single eminence; a frozen sea, of which the little coppices were the islands. That behind which we had encamped the night before soon sunk in the horizon, and the eye had nothing left, save only the sky and snow. The latter was still four feet in depth.

At noon we discovered, and presently passed by, a diminutive wood, or island. At four in the afternoon another was in sight. When I could see none I was alive to the danger to be feared from a storm of wind, which would have driven the snow upon us. The Indians related that whole families often perish in this manner.

It was dark before we reached the wood. A fire, of which we had much need, was soon kindled by the women. Axes were useless here, for the largest tree yielded easily to the hand. It was not only small, but in a state of decay, and easily extracted from the loose soil in which it grew. We supped on wild beef and snow-water. In the night the wind changed to the southward and the weather became milder. I was still asleep, when the women began their noisy preparations for our march.

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The striking of the tents, the tongues of the women, and the cries of the dogs were all heard at once. At the first dawn of day we recommenced our journey. Nothing was visible but the snow and sky; and the snow was drifted into ridges resembling waves.

Soon after sunrise we descried a herd of oxen, extending a mile and a half in length and too numerous to be counted. They traveled, not one after another, as in the snow other animals usually do, but in a broad phalanx, slowly, and sometimes stopping to feed. We did not disturb them, because to have attacked them would have occasioned much delay to our progress; and because the dogs were already sufficiently burdened not to need the addition of the spoil.

At two o'clock we reached a small lake surrounded with wood, and where the trees were of a size somewhat larger than those behind. There were birch trees among the rest. I observed that wherever there was water there was wood. All the snow upon the lake was trodden down by the feet of wild oxen. When this was the case on the land an abundance of coarse grass discovered itself beneath. We were unable to penetrate to the water in the lake, though we cut a hole in the ice to the depth of three feet. Where we cleared the ground for our encampments no stones were to be seen.

This evening we had scarcely encamped when there arrived two Osinipoilles, sent by

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the great chief of the nation, whose name was the Great Road, to meet the troop. The chief had been induced to send them through his anxiety, occasioned by their longer absence than had been expected. The messengers expressed themselves much pleased at finding strangers with their friends, and told us that we were within one day's march of their village, and that the great chief would be highly gratified in learning the long journey which we had performed to visit him. They added that in consequence of finding us they must themselves return immediately, to apprise him of our coming and enable him to prepare for our reception.

Fortunately they had not been able to take any refreshment before a storm of wind and snow commenced which prevented their departure, and in which they must have been lost, had it happened later. The storm continued all the night and part of the next day. Clouds of snow, raised by the wind, fell on the encampment and almost buried it. I had no resource but in my buffalo robe.

In the morning we were alarmed by the approach of a herd of oxen, who came from the open ground to shelter themselves in the wood. Their numbers were so great that we dreaded lest they should fairly trample down the camp; nor could it have happened otherwise but for the dogs, almost as numerous as they, who were able to keep them in check. The Indians

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## Travels and Adventures

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killed several when close upon their tents; but neither the fire of the Indians nor the noise of the dogs could soon drive them away. Whatever were the terrors which filled the wood, they had no other escape from the terrors of the storm.

In the night of the tenth the wind fell. The interval had been passed in feasting on the tongues of the oxen. On the morning of the eleventh the messengers left us before daylight. We had already charged them with a present for the chief, consisting in tobacco and vermilion. Of these articles, the former exceeds all others in estimation; for the Indians are universally great smokers, men, women and children, and no affair can be transacted, civil or religious, without the pipe.

Our march was performed at a quick pace in the track of the messengers. All the fore part of the day escaped without discovering to us a single wood, or even a single twig, with the exception of a very small island, lying on our right; but at four o'clock in the afternoon we reached a little scrub, or bushy tract, on which we encamped. We were at no great distance from the village; but the Indians, as is their custom, delayed their entry till the morning.

On the twelfth at ten o'clock in the forenoon we were in sight of a wood, or island, as the term not unnaturally is, as well with the Indians as others; it appeared to be about a

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mile and a half long. Shortly after, we observed smoke arising from it, and were informed that it was the smoke of the village. The morning was clear and the sun shining.

At eleven o'clock two fresh messengers came from the village, by whom the strangers were formally welcomed on the part of the chief. They told us that they were directed to conduct us and our servants to a lodge, which had been prepared for our reception.

At the entrance of the wood we were met by a large band of Indians, having the appearance of a guard, each man being armed with his bow and spear and having his quiver filled with arrows. In this, as in much that followed, there was more of order and discipline than in anything which I had before witnessed among Indians. The power of these guards appeared to be great, for they treated very roughly some of the people who, in their opinion, approached us too closely. Forming themselves in regular file on either side of us, they escorted us to the lodge, or tent, which was assigned us. It was of a circular form, covered with leather, and not less than twenty feet in diameter. On the ground within, ox-skins were spread for beds and seats.



## Chapter 12

### HOSPITALITY OF THE ASSINIBOIN

ONE-HALF of the tent was appropriated to our use. Several women waited upon us to make a fire and bring water, which latter they fetched from a neighboring tent. Shortly after our arrival these women brought us water, unasked for, saying that it was for washing. The refreshment was exceedingly acceptable, for on our march we had become so dirty that our complexions were not very distinguishable from those of the Indians themselves.

The same women presently borrowed our kettle, telling us that they wanted to boil something for us to eat. Soon after we heard the voice of a man passing through the village and making a speech as he went. Our interpreter informed us that his speech contained an invitation to a feast, accompanied by a proclamation in which the people were required to behave with decorum toward the strangers, and apprised that the soldiers had orders to punish those who should do otherwise.

While we were procuring this explanation an Indian, who appeared to be a chief, came into our tent and invited us to the feast, adding that he would himself show us the way. We

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followed him accordingly, and he carried us to the tent of the great chief, which we found neither more ornamented nor better furnished than the rest.

At our entrance the chief arose from his seat, saluted us in the Indian manner by shaking hands, and addressed us in a few words, in which he offered his thanks for the confidence which we had reposed in him in trusting ourselves so far from our own country. After we were seated, which was on bear skins spread on the ground, the pipe, as usual, was introduced and presented in succession to each person present. Each took his whiff and then let it pass to his neighbor. The stem, which was four feet in length, was held by an officer attendant on the chief. The bowl was of red marble or pipestone.

When the pipe had gone its round the chief, without rising from his seat, delivered a speech of some length, but of which the general purport was of the nature already described in speaking of the Indians of the Lake of the Woods.<sup>68</sup> The speech ended, several of the Indians began to weep, and they were soon joined by the whole party. Had I not previously been witness to a weeping-scene of this description I should certainly have been apprehensive of some disastrous catastrophe; but as it was I listened to it with tranquillity. It lasted for about ten minutes, after which all

<sup>68</sup> See Part Two, chapter 8.—Author.

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tears were dried away, and the honors of the feast were performed by the attending chiefs. This consisted in giving to every guest a dish containing a boiled wild ox's tongue, for preparing which my kettle had been borrowed. The repast finished, the great chief dismissed us by shaking hands, and we returned to our tent.

Having inquired among these people why they always weep at their feasts, and sometimes at their councils, I was answered that their tears flowed to the memory of those deceased relations who formerly assisted both at the one and the other; that their absence on these occasions necessarily brought them fresh into their minds, and at the same time led them to reflect on their own brief and uncertain continuance.<sup>59</sup>

The chief to whose kindly reception we were so much indebted was about five feet ten inches high, and of a complexion rather darker than

<sup>59</sup> The Ossinipoiles are the Issati of the older travelers, and have sometimes been called the *Weepers*.—Author.

This is an error on the part of Henry. Before the Sioux obtained firearms from Europeans they used flint knives and arrowheads, made from flint which they found on the banks of the Thousand Lakes—called by them Isan-ta-mde, or “Lake of Knives.” From this circumstance the eastern Sioux were called Isan-ya-ti, which has in time been corrupted into modern Santee. The Santee include the Wahpetans and the Wazikute; the Siouan division from which the Assiniboin separated are the Yankton.—Editor.

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that of the Indians in general. His appearance was greatly injured by the condition of his head of hair, and this was the result of an extraordinary superstition.

The Indians universally fix upon a particular object as sacred to themselves; as the giver of their prosperity, and as their preserver from evil. The choice is determined either by a dream, or by some strong predilection of fancy, and usually falls upon an animal, or part of an animal, or something else which is to be met with by land or by water: but the Great Road had made choice of his hair—placing, like Sampson, all his safety in this portion of his proper substance! His hair was the fountain of all his happiness; it was his strength and his weapon, his spear and his shield. It preserved him in battle, directed him in the chase, watched over him in the march, and gave length of days to his wives and children. Hair of a quality like this was not to be profaned by the touch of human hands. I was assured that it had never been cut nor combed from his childhood upward; and that when any part of it fell from his head he treasured up that part with care: meanwhile, it did not escape all care, even while growing on the head; but was in the special charge of a spirit, who dressed it while the owner slept. All this might be: but the spirit's style of hair dressing was at least peculiar, the hair being suffered to remain very much as if it received no dressing at all,

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and matted into ropes which spread themselves in all directions.

The same evening we were invited to a second feast. Everything was nearly as before, except that in the morning all the guests were men, and now half were women. All the women were seated on one side of the floor of the tent, and all the men on the other, with a fire placed between them. The fire rendering the tent warm, the men, one after another, dropped the skins which were their garments, and left themselves entirely naked. The appearance of one of them in particular having led us, who were strangers, into an involuntary and ill-stifled laugh, the men calmly asked us the occasion of our mirth; but one of the women pointing to the cause, the individual restored the covering of his robe.

The women are themselves perfectly modest, both in dress and demeanor, and those who were now present maintained the first rank in the village; but custom had rendered the scene inoffensive to their eyes.

Our repast concluded, we departed, taking with us our dishes, in which the greater part of the ox tongues which had been laid upon them remained unconsumed.

All night in our tent we had a guard of six soldiers; and when I awoke, as several times I did, I always found them smoking their pipes in silence.

We rose at daybreak, according to the

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custom of the Indians, who say that they follow it in order to avoid surprises, this being the hour at which the enemy uniformly makes his attack.

Our waiting-women arrived early, bringing wood and water. Washing appeared to me to be a ceremony of religion among the Osinipoilles; and I never saw anything similar among other Indians.

Leaving our tent, we made a progress through the village, which consisted of about two hundred tents, each tent containing from two to four families. We were attended by four soldiers of our guard, but this was insufficient for keeping off the women and children, who crowded around us with insatiable curiosity. Our march was likewise accompanied by a thousand dogs, all howling frightfully.

From the village I saw for the first time one of those herds of horses which the Osinipoilles possess in numbers. It was feeding on the skirts of the plain. The masters of these herds provide them with no fodder; but leave them to find food for themselves by removing the snow with their feet till they reach the grass, which is everywhere on the ground in plenty.

At ten o'clock we returned to our tent, and in a short time the great chief paid us a visit, attended by nearly fifty followers of distinction. In coming in he gave his hand to each of us, and all his attendants followed his example. When we were seated one of the officers went

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through the ceremony of the pipe, after which the great chief delivered a speech, of which the substance was as follows: That he was glad to see us; that he had been, some time since, informed of a fort of the white men's being established on the Pasquayah, and that it had always been his intention to pay a visit there; that we were our own masters, to remain at our pleasure in his village, free from molestation, and assured of his especial protection; that the young men had employed themselves in collecting meat and furs, for the purpose of purchasing certain articles, wherewith to decorate their wives; that within a few days he proposed to move, with his whole village, on this errand; that nothing should be omitted to make our stay as agreeable as possible; that he had already ordered a party of his soldiers to guard us, and that if anything should occur to displease us, his ear was always open to our complaints.

For all these friendly communications we offered our thanks. His visit to the fort it had been a principal object to invite.

After the speech the chief presented us with twenty beaver skins, and as many wolf. In return we gave two pounds of vermilion, and a few fathoms of twisted tobacco, assuring him that when he should arrive at our habitation we would endeavor to repay the benefits which we were receiving from him, and at the same time cheerfully exchange our merchandise for



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the dried meat and skins of his village. It was agreed that he should strike his camp at the end of five days, and that we should remain in it so long, and accompany it to the fort. The chief now departed; and I believe that we were reciprocally pleased with each other.

A short time after he was gone we received an invitation to a feast from a subordinate chief. Our dishes were again filled with tongues, but roasted and not boiled. To furnish us with water we saw an ox's paunch employed as a kettle. This being hung in the smoke of a fire, was filled with snow, and as the snow melted more was added till the paunch was full of water. The lower orifice of the organ was used for drawing off the water, and stopped with a plug and string.

During our whole stay we never had occasion for cookery at home; but my kettle was in constant use, and for the most part in preparation of the feasts at which we were daily guests. In our tent we were regularly supplied with water, either by the women or by the guards.

The guards were changed daily. They frequently beat the people for disobedience of orders, and the offenders made no resistance to the chastisement. We were informed that there was at both extremities of the camp, or village, a picket of two men, whose duty it was not to allow any person to go beyond the bounds. The intention of this was to prevent



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stragglers from falling a prey to the enemy. General orders were issued by the chief morning and evening, and published by a crier in every part of the camp.

In the course of the day the great chief informed us that he proposed hunting the wild ox on the following morning, and invited us to be of the party.

## Chapter 13

### CUSTOMS OF THE RED MEN

**I**N the morning we went to the hunt accordingly. The chief was followed by about forty men and a great number of women. We proceeded to a small island on the plain, at the distance of five miles from the village. On our way we saw large herds of oxen at feed, but the hunters forbore to molest them, lest they should take the alarm.

Arrived at the island, the women pitched a few tents while the chief led his hunters to its southern end where there was a pound, or enclosure. The fence was about four feet high, and formed of strong stakes of birchwood, wattled with smaller branches of the same. The day was spent in making repairs, and by the evening all was ready for the hunt.

At daylight several of the more expert hunters were sent to decoy the animals into the pound. They were dressed in ox skins, with the hair and horns. Their faces were covered, and their gestures so closely resembled those of the animals themselves that had I not been in the secret I should have been as much deceived as the oxen.

At ten o'clock one of the hunters returned, bringing information of the herd. Immediately

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all the dogs were muzzled and, this done, the whole crowd of men and women surrounded the outside of the pound. The herd, of which the extent was so great that I cannot pretend to estimate the numbers, was distant half a mile, advancing slowly and frequently stopping to feed. The part played by the decoyers was that of approaching them within hearing and then bellowing like themselves. On hearing the noise the oxen did not fail to give it attention, and whether from curiosity or sympathy, advanced to meet those from whom it proceeded. These, in the meantime, fell back deliberately toward the pound, always repeating the call whenever the oxen stopped. This was reiterated till the leaders of the herd had followed the decoyers into the jaws of the pound, which, though wide asunder toward the plain, terminated like a funnel in a small aperture, or gateway, and within this was the pound itself. The Indians remark that in all herds of animals there are chiefs, or leaders, by whom the motions of the rest are determined.

The decoyers now retired within the pound and were followed by the oxen. But the former retired still farther, withdrawing themselves at certain movable parts of the fence, while the latter were fallen upon by all the hunters, and presently wounded and killed by showers of arrows. Amid the uproar which ensued the oxen made several attempts to force the fence, but the Indians stopped them, and drove them

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## Alexander Henry

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back by shaking skins before their eyes. Skins were also made use of to stop the entrance, being let down by strings as soon as the oxen were inside. The slaughter was prolonged till the evening, when the hunters returned to their tents. Next morning all the tongues were presented to the chief, to the number of seventy-two.

The women brought the meat to the village on sledges drawn by dogs. The lumps on the shoulders, and the hearts, as well as the tongues were set apart for feasts, while the rest was consumed as ordinary food, or dried for sale at the fort.

The time was now passed in dancing and festivity in all quarters of the village. On the evening of the day after the hunt the chief came to our tent, bringing with him about twenty men and as many women, who separately seated themselves as before; but they now brought musical instruments, and soon after their arrival began to play. The instruments consisted principally in a sort of tambourine, and a gourd filled with stones, which several persons accompanied by shaking two bones together; and others with bunches of deer hoofs, fastened to the end of a stick. Another instrument was one that was no more than a piece of wood of three feet with notches cut on its edge. The performer drew a stick backward and forward along the notches, keeping time. The women sang; and the sweetness

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of their voices exceeded whatever I had heard before.

This entertainment lasted upward of an hour; and when it was finished a dance commenced. The men formed themselves into a row on one side, and the women on the other, and each moved sidewise, first up and then down the room. The sound of bells and other jingling materials attached to the women's dresses enabled them to keep time. The songs and dances were continued alternately till near midnight, when all our visitors departed.

These amusements were given to us complimentarily by the chief. He took no part in the performances himself, but sat smoking while they proceeded.

It had been my wish to go farther on the Plains, till I should have reached the mountains, at the feet of which, as I have already observed, they lie; but the chief informed me that the latter were still at the distance of many days' journey, and that the intervening country was a tract destitute of the least appearance of wood. In the winter, as he asserted, this tract cannot be crossed at all, and in the summer the traveler is in great danger of perishing for want of water; and the only fuel to be met with is the dung of the wild ox. It is intersected by a large river, which runs to the sun's rising, and which has its sources in the mountains.

With regard to the country of the Osinipoilles he said that it lay between the head of the

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Pasquayah, or Sascatchiwaine, and the country of the Sioux, or Nadowessies, who inhabit the heads of the Missisipi. On the west, near the mountains, were the Snake Indians and Blackfeet, troublesome neighbors, by whose hands numbers of his warriors fell.

The Osinipoilles have many villages composed of from one to two hundred tents each. Few exceed the latter number. They often go to the mountains on war parties, and always on horseback. When the great chief intends to go to war he sends messengers to the several villages directing the warriors to meet him at an appointed place and time. With regard to the latter, it is described by the moon, as the beginning, full, or end. In obedience to the summons they assemble in greater numbers than can be counted,<sup>60</sup> armed with the bow, sling, and spear, and with quivers full of arrows. They have still another weapon, formed of a stone of about two pounds weight, which is sewed in leather and made fast to a wooden handle two feet long. In using it the stone is whirled round the handle by a warrior sitting on horseback and attacking at full speed. Every stroke which takes effect brings down a man or horse; or, if used in the chase, an ox. To prevent the weapon from slipping out of the hand a string, which is tied to the handle, is also passed round the wrist of the wearer. The

<sup>60</sup> This was the chief's expression.—Author.

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horses of the Osinipoilles were originally procured from white people with beards who live to the southward; that is, the Spanish colonists in New Mexico.

The animals which I saw alive on the plains are oxen, red deer and wolves; but I saw also the skins of foxes, bears and a small number of panthers, sometimes called tigers and, most properly, cougars.<sup>61</sup>

In their religious notions as well as in their dress, arms, and other particulars, there is a general agreement between the Osinipoilles and the Cristinaux.<sup>62</sup> They believe in a creator and governor of the world, in a future life, and in the spirits, gods, or manitos, whom they denominate *wakons*. Their practices of devotion consist in the singing of songs, accompanied by the drum, or rattle, or both; and the subjects of which are prayers and praises: in smoking feasts, or feasts of the pipe, or calumet, held in honor of the spirits, to whom the smoke of tobacco is supposed to be a most acceptable incense: and in other feasts, as well as in fasts and in sacrifices. The victims of sacrifice are usually dogs, which being killed and hung upon poles are left there to decay.

<sup>61</sup> *Felis concolor*.—Author.

<sup>62</sup> Such of the Christinaux as inhabit the plains have also their horses, like the Osinipoilles. By language the Osinipoilles are allied to the Nadowessies, but they are always at war with them. Of the language of the Nadowessies, Carver has given a short vocabulary.—Author.

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## Alexander Henry

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Many travelers have described the marriages of the Indians, but as they have greatly disagreed in their delineations, I shall venture to set down such particulars as have presented themselves to my immediate view. Though inserted here, they have no exclusive relation to the Osinipoilles, all the Indians whom I have seen having similar customs on this head.

A young man, desirous of marrying a particular young woman, visits the lodge in which she lives at night and when all the family, or rather families, are sleeping on their mats around. He comes provided with a match, or splint of wood, which he lights among the embers of one of the fires which are in the middle of the lodge. The only intention of this is the very obvious one of finding by the help of the light the young woman whom he means to visit, and whom, perhaps, he has to awaken. This done, he extinguishes the light. In speaking to her he whispers, because it is not necessary to disturb all the lodge, and because something like privacy and secrecy belong to the nature of the occasion. If she makes no reply to his address, he considers his attempts at acquaintance as repulsed, and in consequence retires. If the young woman receives him with favor he takes part of her mat. He brings with him his own blanket. I consider this practice as precisely similar to the *bundling* of New England and other countries; and, to say the



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least, as not more licentious.<sup>63</sup> Children born out of wedlock are very rare among the Indians.

The lover who is permitted to remain retires before daybreak. When the young woman has consented to be his wife he opens the affair to his own mother, by whom it is communicated to her's; and if the two mothers agree they mutually apply to their husbands.

The father of the young man then invites the father of the young woman to a stew, or sudatory, prepared for the occasion, and at which he communicates the wishes of his son. The father of the young woman gives no reply till the day following, when in his own turn he invites the other to the sweating house. If he approves of the match, the terms upon which it is to be made are now settled.

Stews, sudatories, or sweating houses are resorted to for cure of sickness, for pleasure, or for giving freedom and vigor to the faculties of the mind when particular deliberation and sagacity are called for. To prepare them for a guest is, therefore, to offer every assistance to his judgment, and manifest the reverse of a disposition to take an unfair advantage of him: it is the exact opposite of offering him liquor. They are constructed of slender branches of trees, united at the top and closely covered with skins or blankets. Within, water

<sup>63</sup> On the custom of bundling, see H. R. Stiles, *Bundling; its Origin, Progress, and Decline in America* (Albany, 1869).—Editor.

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## Alexander Henry

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is poured upon a red-hot stone, till the steam induces perspiration.

The terms are either that the young man, as was most usual in older times, shall serve the father of the young woman for a certain period (as for three years) or that he shall redeem himself from this obligation by a present.

If he be to serve, then, at the time fixed, he goes, accompanied by his father and mother, to the lodge of the young woman's family. There he is desired by her mother to sit down on the same mat with her. A feast is usually served, and the young woman's father delivers a suitable speech. The young man is thenceforward regarded as one of his wife's family, and remains in the lodge accordingly.

If, on the other hand, he redeems himself by a present, then his father and mother go alone to the lodge of the young woman's family, carrying a present. If the present be accepted, they leave it and return home; and shortly after the father and mother, accompanied by their daughter, go to the lodge of the bridegroom's family, where the bride is desired to sit down beside her husband. The feast and speech are now made by the young man's father, and the young woman is received into his family.

Every man marries as many wives as he pleases, and as he can maintain; and the usual number is from one to five. The oldest in most cases is the mistress of the family, and

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of the other wives among the rest. They appear to live in much harmony. Polygamy among the Indians conduces little to population. For the number of adults the children are always few.

In naming a child the father officiates, and the ceremony is simple. The relations are invited to a feast, when he makes a speech, informing the guests of the name by which the child is to be called, and addresses a prayer to the Great Spirit, petitioning for the child's life and welfare.

With respect to the burial of the dead, if the death happen in the winter season and at a distance from the burial ground of the family, the body invariably accompanies all the wanderings and journeys of the survivors till the spring, and till their arrival at the place of interment. In the meantime it is everywhere rested on a scaffold, out of the reach of beasts of prey. The grave is made of a circular form, about five feet deep, and lined with bark of the birch or some other tree, or with skins. A seat is prepared, and the body is placed in a sitting posture, with supporters on either side. If the deceased be a man, his weapons of war and of the chase are buried with him, as also his shoes, and everything for which as a living warrior or hunter he would have occasion, and, indeed, all his property; and I believe that those whose piety alone may not be strong enough to ensure to the dead the entire

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inventory of what is supposed to be necessary for them, or is their own, are compelled to do them justice by another argument, and which is the fear of their displeasure. A defrauded or neglected ghost, although invisible, can disperse the game of the plains or forests so that the hunter shall hunt in vain; and either in the chase or in the war, turn aside the arrow, or palsy the arm that draws the bow: in the lodge it can throw a child into the fire.

The body and its accompaniments are covered with bark, the bark with logs, and the logs with earth. This done, a relation stands up and pronounces an eulogium on the deceased, extolling his virtues and relating his exploits. He dwells upon the enemies whom he slew, the scalps and prisoners which he took, his skill and industry in the chase, and his deportment as a father, husband, son, brother, friend, and member of the community. At each assertion which he makes the speaker strikes a post which is placed near the grave, a gesture of asseveration, and which enforces the attention of the audience and assists in counting up the points delivered. The eulogium finished, the post is painted,<sup>64</sup> and on it are represented the number of prisoners taken, by so many figures of men; and of killed and scalped, by figures without heads. To these are added his badge, called, in the Algonquin

<sup>64</sup> Hence *The Painted Post*, the name of a village in Pennsylvania.—Author.

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tongue, a *totem*, and which is in the nature of an armorial bearing. It informs the passing Indian of the family to which the deceased belonged. A serious duty at the grave is that of placing food for the use of the dead on the journey to the land of souls. This care is never neglected, even under every disadvantage of molestation. In the neighborhood of the traders, dishes of cooked venison are very commonly placed on the graves of those long buried and as commonly removed by Europeans, even without offense to those who placed them there. In situations of great want I have more than once resorted to them for food.

The men among the Osinipoilles are well made, but their color is much deeper than that of the more northern Indians. Some of the women are tolerably handsome, considering how they live, exposed to the extremes of heat and cold and placed in an atmosphere of smoke for at least one-half of the year. Their dress is of the same materials and of the same form with that of the female Cristinaux. The married women suffer their hair to grow at random, and even hang over their eyes. All the sex is fond of garnishing the lower edge of the dress with small bells, deer hoofs, pieces of metal, or anything capable of making a noise. When they move the sounds keep time, and make a fantastic harmony.

The Osinipoilles treat with great cruelty their slaves. As an example, one of the

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principal chiefs, whose tent was near that which we occupied, had a female slave of about twenty years of age. I saw her always on the outside of the door of the tent, exposed to the severest cold; and having asked the reason, I was told that she was a slave. The information induced me to speak to her master in the hope of procuring some mitigation of the hardships she underwent; but he gave me for answer that he had taken her on the other side of the western mountains; that at the same time he had lost a brother and a son in battle; and that the enterprise had taken place in order to release one of his own nation who had been a slave in her's, and who had been used with much greater severity than that which she experienced. The reality of the last of these facts appeared to me to be impossible. The wretched woman fed and slept with the dogs, scrambling with them for the bones which were thrown out of the tent. When her master was within she was never permitted to enter; at all seasons the children amused themselves with impunity in tormenting her, thrusting lighted sticks into her face, and if she succeeded in warding off these outrages she was violently beaten. I was not successful in procuring any diminution of her sufferings, but I drew some relief from the idea that their duration could not be long. They were too heavy to be sustained.

It is known that some slaves have the good

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fortune to be adopted into Indian families, and are afterward allowed to marry in them, but among the Osinipoilles this seldom happens; and even among the Chippewa, where a female slave is so adopted and married I never knew her to lose the degrading appellation of *wakan*, a slave.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>65</sup> This word *wakan*, which in the Algonquin language signifies a slave, is not to be confounded with *wakan* or *wakon*, which in the language of the Nadowessies and Osinipoilles signifies a spirit or manito.—Author.

## Chapter 14

### THE RETURN TO FORT DES PRAIRIES

ON the nineteenth of February the chief apprised us that it was his design to depart the next morning for the fort. In consequence we collected our baggage, which, however, was but small, consisting in a buffalo robe for each person, an axe, and a kettle. The last was reluctantly parted with by our friends, who had none left to supply its place.

At daybreak on the twentieth all was noise and confusion in the camp, the women beating and loading the dogs, and the dogs howling and crying. The tents were speedily struck, and the coverings and poles packed up to be drawn by the dogs.

Soon after sunrise the march began. In the van were twenty-five soldiers, who were to beat the path so that the dogs might walk. They were followed by about twenty men, apparently in readiness for contingent services; and after these went the women, each driving one or two, and some five, loaded dogs. The number of these animals actually drawing loads exceeded five hundred. After the baggage marched the main body of the men, carrying only their arms. The rear was guarded by



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about forty soldiers. The line of march certainly exceeded three miles in length.

The morning was clear and calm. Our road was a different one from that by which we had reached the camp. We passed several herds of wild oxen, which betrayed some alarm at the noise of the dogs and women resounding on every side.

Our march was pursued till sunset, when we reached a small wood, the first that we had seen all day. The great chief desired Mr. Patterson and myself to lodge in his own tent, and we accordingly became part of his family. We saw that his entire and numerous household was composed of relations. The chief, after smoking his pipe, determined the line of march for the next day; and his dispositions in this regard were immediately published through the camp.

At daybreak our tents were again struck, and we proceeded on our march in the same order as the day before. Today (to follow the phraseology of the plains) we had once *land in sight*, consisting in two small *islands*, lying at a great distance from our road. On our march the chief informed us that he proposed reaching another camp of his people that evening, and would take it with him to the fort. Accordingly, at about four o'clock in the afternoon we discovered a wood and presently afterward saw smoke rising from it. At sunset we encamped near the wood, where we found a hundred

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tents. We were not long arrived before the chiefs of this second camp paid a visit to the Great Road, who informed them of his intention to visit the fort and recommended to them to join his march. They consented, and orders were given as usual by a public officer.

The night afforded me but little sleep, so great was the disturbance from noises of all kinds; feasting and dancing; the women chastising the dogs; the dogs of the two camps meeting and maintaining against each other the whole night long a universal war.

In the morning the two camps united in one line of march, which was now so far extended that those in the rear could not descry the front. At noon we passed a small wood, where we saw horses feeding. The Indians informed me that they belonged to one of their camps, or villages; and that it was their uniform custom to leave their horses in the beginning of the winter at the first wood where they were when the snow fell, at which the horses always remain through the season, and where their masters are sure to find them in the spring. The horses never go out of sight of the island assigned them, winter or summer, for fear of wanting its shelter in a storm.

We encamped this evening among some small brushwood. Our fire went out accidentally in the night, and I was kept awake by the cold and by the noise of the dogs.

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In the course of the next day, the twenty-third of the month, we passed several coppices, and saw that the face of the country was changing and that we had arrived on the margin of the Plains. On the twenty-seventh we encamped on a large wood, where the Indians resolved on leaving the old women and children till their return from the fort, from which we were now distant only one day's march. On the twenty-eighth they halted for the whole day; but we engaged two of them to lead us forward, and thus arrived in the evening at the fort, where we found all well. A large band of Cristinaux had brought skins from the Beaver River.

Next day the Indians advanced their camp to within half a mile of the fort, but left thirty tents behind them in the wood. They continued with us three days, selling their skins and provisions for trinkets.

It is not in this manner that the northern Indians dispose of the harvest of the chase. With them the principal purchases are of necessities; but the Osinipoilles are less dependent on our merchandise. The wild ox alone supplies them with everything which they are accustomed to want. The hide of this animal, when dressed, furnishes soft clothing for the women; and dressed with the hair on, it clothes the men. The flesh feeds them; the sinews afford them bowstrings; and even the paunch, as we have seen, provides them with

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that important utensil, the kettle. The amazing numbers of these animals prevent all fear of want, a fear which is incessantly present to the Indians of the North.

On the fourth morning the Osinipoilles departed. The Great Road expressed himself much satisfied with his reception, and he was well deserving of a good one; for in no situation could strangers have been treated more hospitably than we were treated in his camp. The best of everything it contained was given us.

The Osinipoilles at this period had had no acquaintance with any foreign nation sufficient to affect their ancient and pristine habits. Like the other Indians, they were cruel to their enemies, but as far as the experience of myself and other Europeans authorizes me to speak, they were a harmless people, with a large share of simplicity of manners and plain dealing. They lived in fear of the Cristinaux, by whom they were not only frequently imposed upon, but pillaged when the latter met their bands in smaller numbers than their own.

As to the Cristinaux, they are a shrewd race of men, and can cheat, lie, and sometimes steal; yet even the Cristinaux are not so much addicted to stealing as is reported of the Indians of the South Sea; their stealing is pilfering; and they seldom pilfer anything but rum, a commodity which tempts them beyond the power of resistance.

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I remained at Fort des Prairies till the twenty-second of March, on which day I commenced my return to Beaver Lake.

Fort des Prairies, as already intimated, is built on the margin of the Pasquayah, or Saskatchewan, which river is here two hundred yards across and flows at the depth of thirty feet below the level of its banks. The fort has an area of about an acre, which is enclosed by a good stockade, though formed only of poplar, or aspen wood,<sup>66</sup> such as the country affords. It has two gates, which are carefully shut every evening, and has usually from fifty to eighty men for its defense.

Four different interests were struggling for the Indian trade of the Saskatchewan; but fortunately they had this year agreed to join their stock, and when the season was over, to divide the skins and meat. This arrangement was beneficial to the merchants, but not directly so to the Indians, who, having no other place to resort to nearer than Hudson's Bay or Cumberland House, paid greater prices than if a competition had subsisted. A competition, on the other hand, afflicts the Indians with a variety of evils in a different form.

The following were the prices of goods at Fort des Prairies:

A gun. . . . . 20 beaver skins

<sup>66</sup> This fort, or one which occupied a contiguous site, was formerly known by the name of Fort aux Trembles.  
—Author.

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A stroud blanket . . . . . 10 beaver skins  
A white blanket . . . . . 8 beaver skins  
An axe of one pound weight 3 beaver skins  
Half a pint of gunpowder 1 beaver skin  
Ten balls . . . . . 1 beaver skin,  
but the principal profits accrued from the sale  
of knives, beads, flints, steels, awls, and other  
small articles.

Tobacco, when sold, fetched one beaver skin  
per foot of *Spencer's twist*; and rum, not very  
strong, two beaver skins per bottle: but a  
great proportion of these commodities was dis-  
posed of in presents.<sup>67</sup>

The quantity of furs brought into the fort  
was very great. From twenty to thirty Indians  
arrived daily, laden with packs of beaver skins.

<sup>67</sup> The tobacco supplied by the traders to the Indians  
was commonly twisted in the form of a rope, and the  
quantity of a given portion was indicated by its  
length; the rum, before being sold to the natives was  
diluted with water, the degree of dilution depending  
upon such factors as the rapacity of the trader, the  
eagerness of the native to procure the rum, and the  
extent of his sophistication with respect to the use of  
this beverage.—Editor.

## Chapter 15

### JOURNEY TO MONTREAL

THE days being now lengthened and the snow capable of bearing the foot, we traveled swiftly; and the weather, though cold, was very fine.

On the fifth of April we arrived without accident at Cumberland House. On our way we saw nothing living except wolves, who followed us in great numbers, and against whom we were obliged to use the precaution of maintaining large fires at our encampments.

On the seventh we left Cumberland House, and on the ninth, in the morning, reached our fort on Beaver Lake, where I had the pleasure of finding my friends well.

In my absence the men had supported themselves by fishing; and they were all in health with the exception of one, who was hurt at the Grand Portage by a canoe's falling upon him.

On the twelfth Mr. Thomas Frobisher with six men was despatched to the River Churchill, where he was to prepare a fort, and inform such Indians as he might see on their way to Hudson's Bay of the approaching arrival of his partners.

The ice was still in the same state as in January; but as the season advanced the

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quantity of fish diminished, insomuch that Mr. Joseph Frobisher and myself were obliged to fish incessantly; and often, notwithstanding every exertion, the men went supperless to bed. In a situation like this the Canadians are the best men in the world; they rarely murmur at their lot, and their obedience is yielded cheerfully.

We continued fishing till the fifth of May, when we saw swans flying toward the Maligne. From this circumstance and from our knowledge of the rapidity of the current of that river, we supposed it was free from ice. In consequence I proceeded thither, and arriving in the course of a day's journey, found it covered with swans, geese, and other waterfowl, with which I soon loaded my sledge, and then returned to the fort.

The passage toward the Churchill being thus far open, we left our fort on the twenty-first of May, forty in number, and with no greater stock of provision than a single supper. At our place of encampment we set our nets and caught more fish than we had need of, and the same food was plenty with us all the way. The fish were pickerel and whitefish.

On the twenty-second we crossed two carrying-places of half a mile each, through a level country, with marshes on the border of the river. The sun now appeared above the horizon at half-past eight <sup>68</sup> o'clock in the morning,

<sup>68</sup> Apparently a misprint for half-past three—Editor.



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and there was twilight all the time that he was below it. The men had but few hours for rest, for after encamping a supper was not only to be cooked, but caught, and it was therefore late before they went to sleep. Mr. Frobisher and myself rose at three; and the men were stirring still earlier, in order to take up the nets, so that we might eat our breakfast and be on our journey before sunrise.

On the sixth of June we arrived at a large lake, which, to our disappointment, was entirely frozen over, and at the same time the ice was too weak to be walked upon. We were now fearful of detention for several days, but had the consolation to find our situation well supplied with fish. On the following night there was a fall of snow, which lay on the ground to the depth of a foot. The wind was from the northeast. The Indians who were of our party hunted, and killed several elks, or moose deer.<sup>69</sup> At length the wind changed into the southern quarter, on which we had rain, and the snow melted. On the tenth, with some difficulty we crossed the lake, which is twenty miles in length, through a channel opened in the ice. On the fifteenth, after passing several carrying-places, we reached the River Churchill, Missinibi, or Missinipi, where we found Mr. Thomas Frobisher and his men, who were in

<sup>69</sup> This was, of course, the moose; Henry uses the term "red deer" to designate the American elk.—Editor.

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good health and had built a house for our reception.

The whole country from Beaver Lake to the Missinipi is low near the water, with mountains in the distance. The uplands have a growth of small pine trees, and the valleys, of birch and spruce. The river is called the Churchill River, from Fort Churchill in Hudson Bay, the most northerly of the company's factories or trading-houses, and which is seated at its mouth. By Mr. Joseph Frobisher it was named English River. At the spot where our house was built the river is five miles wide and very deep. We were estimated by the Indians to be distant three hundred miles from the sea. Cumberland House was to the southward of us, distant four hundred miles. We had the light of the sun in sufficient quantity for all purposes during the whole twenty-four hours. The redness of his rays reached far above the horizon.

We were in expectation of a particular band of Indians, and as few others made their appearance we resolved on ascending the river to meet them, and even, in failure of that event, to go as far westward as Lake Arambuthcow,<sup>70</sup> distant according to the Indians four hundred and fifty miles.

With these views we embarked on the sixteenth with six Canadians and also one Indian

<sup>70</sup> Called also *Athapuscow*, and *Athabasca*.—Author.  
Modern Lake Athabasca.—Editor.

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woman, in the capacity of a guide, in which service Mr. Frobisher had previously employed her.

As we advanced we found the river frequently widening into lakes thirty miles long and so broad, as well as so crowded with islands, that we were unable to distinguish the mainland on either side. Above them we found a strait, in which the channel was shallow, rocky, and broken, with the attendant features of rapids and carrying-places. The country was mountainous and thinly wooded, and the banks of the river were continued rocks. Higher up, lofty mountains discovered themselves, destitute even of moss, and it was only at intervals that we saw afar off a few stunted pine trees.

On the fifth day we reached the Rapide du Serpent, which is supposed to be three hundred miles from our point of departure. We found whitefish so numerous in all the rapids that shoals of many thousands were visible with their backs above the water. The men supplied themselves by killing them with their paddles. The water is clear and transparent.

The Rapide du Serpent is about three miles long and very swift. Above this we reached another rapid, over the carrying-place of which we carried our canoe. At this place vegetation began to reappear, and the country became level and of an agreeable aspect.

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Nothing human had hitherto discovered itself, but we had seen several bears and two cariboux on the sides of the mountains, without being able to kill anything.

The course of the river was here from south to north. We continued our voyage till the twenty-fourth, when, a large opening being before us, we saw a number of canoes filled with Indians on their voyage down the stream.<sup>71</sup> We soon met each other in the most friendly manner.

We made presents of tobacco to the chiefs, and were by them requested to put to shore that we might encamp together and improve our acquaintance. In a short time we were visited by the chiefs, who brought us beaver skins, in return for which we gave a second present; and we now proposed to them to return with them to our fort, where we were provided with large quantities of such goods as they wanted. They received our proposal with satisfaction.

On the twenty-fifth of June we embarked with all the Indians in our company, and continued our voyage day and night, stopping only to boil our kettle. We reached our house on the first of July.

The Indians comprised two bands, or parties, each bearing the name of its chief, of whom one was called the Marten, and the other the

<sup>71</sup> The traders had reached Lake Ile à la Crosse on the upper Churchill River.—Editor.

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Rapid. They had joined for mutual defense against the Cristinaux, of whom they were in continual dread. They were not at war with that nation, but subject to be pillaged by its bands.

While the lodges of the Indians were setting up the chiefs paid us a visit, at which they received a large present of merchandise, and agreed to our request that we should be permitted to purchase the furs of their bands.

They inquired whether or not we had any rum; and, being answered in the affirmative, they observed that several of their young men had never tasted that liquor, and that if it was too strong it would affect their heads. Our rum was in consequence submitted to their judgment; and after tasting it several times they pronounced it to be too strong, and requested that we would *order a part of the spirit to evaporate*. We complied by adding more water to what had received a large proportion of that element before; and this being done, the chiefs signified their approbation.

We remarked that no other Indian approached our house while the chiefs were in it. The chiefs observed to us that their young men, while sober, would not be guilty of any irregularity, but that lest when in liquor they should be troublesome, they had ordered a certain number not to drink at all, but maintain a constant guard. We found their orders punctually obeyed, and not a man attempted

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to enter our house during all the night. I say all the night because it was in the course of this night, the next day, and the night following, that our traffic was pursued and finished. The Indians delivered their skins at a small window made for that purpose, asking at the same time for the different things they wished to purchase, and of which the prices had been previously settled with the chiefs. Of these some were higher than those quoted from Fort des Prairies.

On the third morning this little fair was closed, and on making up our packs we found that we had purchased twelve thousand beaver skins, besides large numbers of otter and marten.

Our customers were from Lake Arabuthcow, of which and the surrounding country they were the proprietors, and at which they had wintered. They informed us that there was at the farther end of that lake a river, called Peace River,<sup>72</sup> which descended from the Stony or Rocky Mountains, and from which mountains the distance to the *salt lake*, meaning the Pacific Ocean, was not great; that the lake emptied itself by a river which ran to the north-

<sup>72</sup> Henry was on the eve of making a great discovery, for the Peace River was first explored by Alexander Mackenzie in 1792. It takes its name, according to Mackenzie from Peace Point, a place where a treaty was concluded between the Christinaux and the Beaver Indians.—Editor.

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ward, which they called *Kiratchinini Sibi*,<sup>73</sup> or Slave River,<sup>74</sup> and which flows into another lake, called by the same name; but whether this lake was or was not the sea, or whether it emptied itself or not into the sea they were unable to say. They were at war with the Indians who live at the bottom of the river where the water is salt. They also made war on the people beyond the mountains toward the Pacific Ocean, to which their warriors had frequently been near enough to see it. Though we conversed with these people in the Cree, or Cristinaux language, which is the usual medium of communication, they were Chepewyans, or Rocky Mountain Indians.

They were in possession of several ultramontane prisoners, two of whom we purchased; one, a woman of twenty-five years of age, and the other a boy of twelve. They had both been recently taken, and were unable to speak the language of their masters. They conversed with each other in a language exceedingly agreeable to the ear, composed of short words, and spoken with a quick utterance. We gave for each a gun.

The dress of the Chepewyans nearly resembled that of the Cristinaux, except that it was composed of beaver and marten skins instead of those of the ox and elk. We found

<sup>73</sup> Or *Yatchinini Sipi*.—Author.

<sup>74</sup> These are the rivers which have since been explored by Sir Alexander Mackenzie.—Author.



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these people orderly and unoffending, and they appeared to consider the whites as creatures of a superior order, to whom everything is known.

The women were dirty, and very inattentive to their whole persons, the head excepted, which they painted with red ocher, in defect of vermilion. Both themselves and their husbands for them were forward in seeking a loose intercourse with the Europeans. The former appeared vain of solicitation, and having first obtained the consent of their husbands, afterward communicated to them their success. The men, who no doubt thought with the Cristinaux on this subject,<sup>75</sup> were the first to speak in behalf of their wives; and were even in the practice of carrying them to Hudson Bay, a journey of many hundred miles, on no other errand.

Having been fortunate enough to administer medical relief to one of these Indians during their stay, I came to be considered as a physician, and found that this was a character held in high veneration. Their solicitude and credulity as to drugs and nostrums had exposed them to gross deceptions on the part of the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company. One of the chiefs informed me that he had been at the Bay the year before, and there purchased a quantity of medicines, which he would allow me to inspect. Accordingly, he brought

<sup>75</sup> See page 249.—Author. Page 241 of this volume.—Editor.



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a bag containing numerous small papers, in which I found lumps of white sugar, grains of coffee, pepper, allspice, cloves, tea, nutmegs, ginger and other things of this kind, sold as specifics against evil spirits, and against the dangers of battle; as giving power over enemies, and particularly the white bear,<sup>76</sup> of which the Indians in these latitudes are much afraid: others were infallible against barrenness in women; against difficult labors; and against a variety of other afflictions. In a second parcel I found small prints; the identical ones which in England are commonly sold in sheets to children, but each of which was here transformed into a talisman, for the cure of some evil, or obtention of some delight: No. 1. "A sailor kissing his mistress, on his return from sea"; this, worn about the person of a gallant, attracted, though concealed, the affections of the sex! No. 2. "A soldier in Arms"; this poured a sentiment of valor into the possessor, and gave him the strength of a giant!

<sup>76</sup> Apparently the grizzly bear. Although Theodore Roosevelt has rather made light of the danger of hunting the grizzly, to meet him with a modern high-power rifle is a different matter than it was to meet him with the inferior weapons possessed by the natives a century or more ago. Moreover, the grizzly himself has learned something by his hundred years of contact with the white man, and is, apparently, a far less pugnacious animal than he was in former times. Lewis and Clark, dauntless seekers of adventure as they were, found the grizzly a foe to be dreaded; "I must confess," records Lewis, "that I do not like the gentlemen, and had

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By means of these commodities many customers were secured to the company; and even those Indians who shortened their voyage by dealing with us sent forward one canoe, laden with beaver skins, to purchase articles of this kind at Cumberland House. I did not venture to dispute their value.

This part of our commercial adventure completed, Mr. Frobisher and myself left the remainder of our merchandise in the care of Mr. Thomas Frobisher, who was to proceed with them to Lake Arabuthcow, and on the fourth of July, set out on our return to the Grand Portage.

In recrossing Beaver Lake the wind obliged us to put into a bay which I had not visited before. Taking my gun I went into the woods in search of game; but I had not advanced more than half a mile when I found the country almost inaccessible by reason of masses of rock which were scattered in all directions: some were as large as houses, and lay as if they had been first thrown into the air and then suffered to fall into their present posture. By a circuitous route I at last ascended the mountain, from one side of which they had fallen; the whole body was fractured, and separated by large chasms. In some places parts of the mountain of half an acre in surface were raised above the general level. It was a scene for the

rather fight two Indians than one bear."—Editor.

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warfare of the Titans, or for that of Milton's angels!

The river, which, when we first arrived at Cumberland House, had run with a swift current into the Sascatchiwaine, now ran in a contrary direction, toward the lake. This was owing to the rise of water in the Sascatchiwaine, from which same cause all the lowlands were at this time overflowed.

Our twilight nights continued till we were to the southward of Lake Winipegou. The weather was so favorable that we crossed that lake in six days, though in going it took us thirty.

On an island in the Lake of the Woods we saw several Indians, toward whom we made in hopes to purchase provisions, of which we were much in want; and whom we found full of a story that some strange nation had entered Montreal, taken Quebec, killed all the English, and would certainly be at the Grand Portage before we arrived there.<sup>77</sup>

On my remarking to Mr. Frobisher that I suspected the *Bastonnais* (Bostonians, or English colonists) had been doing some mischief in Canada, the Indians directly exclaimed, "Yes, that is the name! *Bastonnais*." They

<sup>77</sup> General Montgomery captured Montreal November 12, 1775, and was killed while vainly assaulting Quebec on the last day of the year. In May, 1776, the American force raised the siege and retreated to New England.—Editor.

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## Alexander Henry

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were lately from the Grand Portage, and appeared seriously apprehensive that the *Bastonnais* were coming into the Northwest.<sup>78</sup>

At the Forks of the River à la Pluie there were a large number of Indians under a friendly chief, with which latter I had had a previous acquaintance. On my visiting him he told me that there was bad news; and then repeated the story which we had heard on the Lake of the Woods, adding that some of his young men were evil inclined, and that he wished us immediately to depart. We were not deaf to the admonition, of the grounds of which we stayed long enough to be convinced. We were roughly importuned for rum; and one of the Indians, after we had embarked, fetched his gun and fired at us twice, but without effect.

No further accident attended our voyage to the Grand Portage, from which place we pursued the route to Montreal, where we arrived on the fifteenth of October. We found the province delivered from the irruption of the colonists, and protected by the forces of General Burgoyne.

<sup>78</sup> *Bastonnais* (*Bostonnais*, Bostonians) is the name by which the Canadians describe all the inhabitants of the English colonies, now the United States; and in the Northwest the English traders commonly use the French language.—Author.

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